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PLAY METER

Volume 4, Number 19

October 15, 1978

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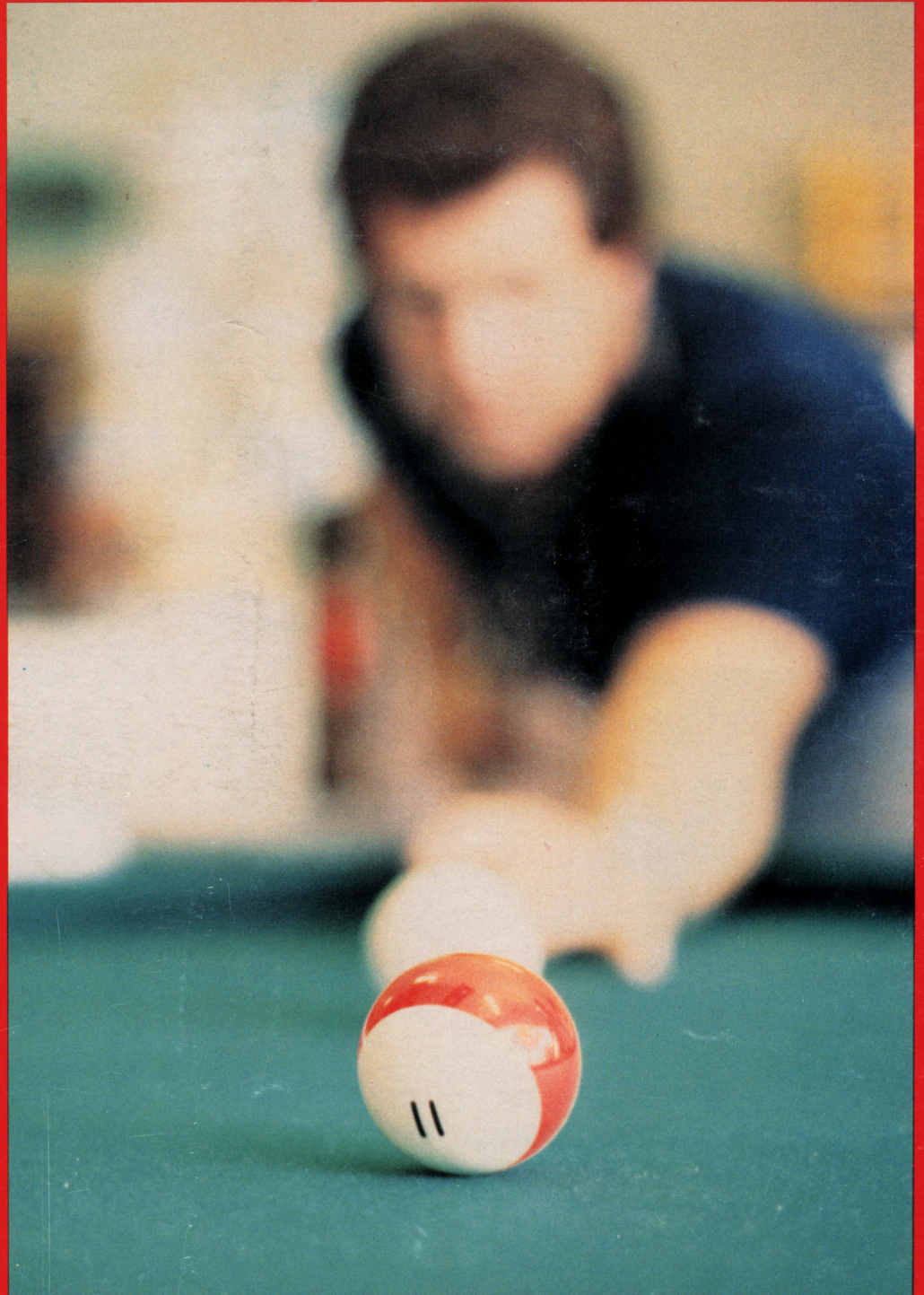
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PLAY METER

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October 15, 1978

Staff

Publisher and Editor: Ralph C. Lally II
Managing Editor: David Pierson
International Editor: David Snook
Editor, *Coin Slot*
Technical Editor: Robin Minnear
Game Doctors
Correspondents: Zac Oliver
Tom Howarth
Roger C. Sharpe
Gene Beley
Dick Welu
Pat Matthews
Mary Claire Blakeman
Art Direction: Katey Schwark
Administrative Assistant: Valerie Mitchell
Typography: Vickie Lofton
Circulation Manager: Gloria Dering
Advertising Representative: Ralph C. Lally II
European Representative: Esmay Leslie

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From the Editor

The industry is in a crisis.

Last month the Copyright Royalty Tribunal handed down a ruling which will have far-reaching consequences on the coin-operated amusement business, unless it is struck down in court.

The ruling by the five-member panel requires operators to supply the federal agency with a list of each jukebox location for the purpose of dividing up royalty collections among the three performing rights societies. A location listing is one thing operators have refused to divulge, insisting that such information is confidential and vital to the survival of thousands of small businesses across the country.

But the federal agency in making its ruling blinded itself to this argument. The Copyright Royalty Tribunal obviously feels that its need for industry information is more important than the survival of the industry itself. Such governmental arrogance and overregulation is exactly why Proposition 13 Fever is spreading across the country.

What the Copyright Royalty Tribunal and the performing rights societies fail to comprehend is that coin machine operators are small businessmen. Many operators are nothing more than husband-and-wife teams. Some include other family members or one, maybe two, full-time employees. So additional regulations place a great burden on these operators. As it is now, the A.M.O.A. reports that it has received countless complaints about the difficulty in complying with the jukebox copyright law, and that was *before the location listing was required*.

Also, this requirement jeopardizes the company's existence because, by complying with the law, an operator is leaving himself open to maverick operators who wish to sell amusement equipment straight to the locations.

This presents an acute dilemma for the operator: should he comply with the law and jeopardize his business's standing or should he refuse and choose instead civil disobedience?

It's a question which every operator must answer for himself.



David Pierson
Managing Editor



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"The FREE FREIGHT People!"

Guest Editorial

By Barry Fireman

"If we let it fall off the back of the truck while we're driving up a steep hill can we collect insurance on it?" Believe it or not, I really considered letting one of my mechanics do that with a late model TV driving game.

Some of the machines made today look and behave as though they were dropped before delivery to the distributor. Your brand new machine is delivered to a game room. Your people plug it in and hold their breaths hoping that it works. If you are lucky enough to have it work right away you now have a fifty-fifty chance of getting through the first week without any trouble. Your chances drop to twenty percent the second week and surely you will have some service on it by the third week. I believe you operators will agree with me that many of the manufacturers are taking unfair advantage of the guy who has to live with the equipment long after the sale is made and long after the game is out of warranty.

In case you are interested, the term *warranty* is defined as, "An assurance by the seller of property that the goods or property are as represented or will be, as promised. A guarantee." In other words, when you shell out \$1695 for a new game, you are supposed to get back enough money through collections to pay your expenses on the game and make a profit. Some games don't take in as much money as others, but they are supposed to work. Everyone in this industry knows that every game requires some maintenance, and some games require more than others. After all, a pinball machine has a steel ball crashing around a playfield hitting plastic and rubber parts and we all know that something is going to give, and it's not going to be the ball. But the problems are not supposed to be chronic and they are not supposed to crop up in game after game.

My distributors tell me that they get little or no back-up from the factory on many of the broken parts problems even while the game is under warranty. There's that word *warranty* again. Can anyone tell me how long the warranty period is on a machine anyway? I've heard thirty, sixty, and ninety days. I've even heard six months. But whose warranty is it? I've been told that the factory's policy is "Send us your board and we will fix it and return it." Phooey! If you are sitting with a game out of order in New York and the board has to go back to California for analysis and repair, you are going to wait weeks for your game to become operational again. So the distributors fix the boards for the first thirty or ninety days on their own with little or no help from the factory.

The manufacturers should follow examples which have proven to work in other industries. Set up warranty shops or subsidize warranty work performed by the distributor. But more importantly, they should make the games with better materials, with better quality so the games can withstand the beating they get.

I'm often asked, "Don't your people watch your machines to see that the kids don't abuse the equipment?" Yes, we watch our games, and the kids do not abuse them. But let's be honest. Our kids don't act like the little old lady from Pasadena who uses her car only to drive to church on Sunday. Our kids range in age

from 12 to 18; and, when they put a quarter in a driving game, they are going to drive like hell. They are not going to care what happens to the flimsy gear shift mechanism or steering wheel. They're going to shift like crazy and stomp as hard as they can on the accelerator. That's half the fun. When they crash they want to crash big. They become mad men. Why not? They're supposed to. It's not for real. It's only a game. And the game is supposed to hold up too.

So what happens when a bad accelerator is put on a machine or a poorly designed gear shift mechanism? It breaks. So you buy a new one and it breaks again. You call the distributor and complain and you are told, "I can't help it. I don't make the parts. Call the factory." So you call the factory and they tell you they are sorry. They are not having any problems with the part you are complaining about. Sure, I'm the only one in the whole world having trouble with a steering mechanism. They tell you they can't believe you have all those broken parts. Or they tell you they are designing a new part which will be out in 1984. Phooey!!

The truth is that they probably made a zillion steering mechanisms and they have to use them up and guess who gets stuck with them? The factory now makes a new game, and it is a dynamite driving game. And you guessed it, they use the same gear shift mechanism. And it breaks too. And you have to start all over again with downtime, with shipping costs, with stocking extra spare parts. And you *do* it too because the game is a good money maker when it works, IF it works. It's enough to drive you nuts. We just took delivery on a brand new pinball machine last week. It came in and promptly burned out two flipper coils. We called the distributor, and he sent out the coils along with a bill for \$7.20. The phone is still smoking.

Something has to be done. Perhaps authorized warranty shops. You can get your television or stereo fixed; so why not your game. There should be standards in this industry. Manufacturers should be made to conform to these standards by a committee of industry experts. Maybe we should have a testing laboratory which should approve a game before it is allowed on the market. How about recalling a game when a defect is discovered. Seriously now, for the money the manufacturers are getting for their machines they should build in more quality. Use more steel and less plastic. We have a game that we bought in January. We have had collections out of it for thirteen weeks. The rest of the time it has been in our distributor's shop for repairs or on the truck going back and forth. The last time it went back I told him to keep the game and give me back my money. My customers don't trust the game anymore and won't play it. The answer was, "We'll fix it again." Nobody made money on this game except the manufacturer.

I have heard lately that there is so much unrest among games operators that there is talk of a revolt. If there is to be one I hope this is "the shot heard round the industry." We're paying high prices for these games, why should we have to buy them twice? Charge more if you have to, but make it to last.



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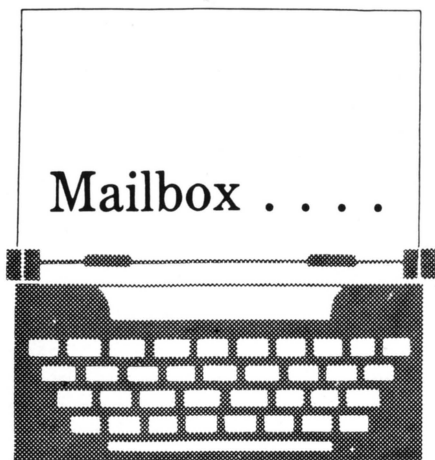
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Bob DeClementi
Select Service Systems
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Home warranties

In the August 15 issue of

PLAY METER, the "Technical Topics" article ("Take the Ball and Run," page 39) states "There is also a warranty that can't be obtained in the normal video market."

It should be pointed out that a consumer warranty is not valid for any type of equipment that is altered or used in a commercial application. The warranty is valid for normal consumer use only.

Pat O'Toole
EZE Industries
Lajas, Puerto Rico

Simple way

In writing the article "What's Your Return?" (page 29) for the June 15, issue, Mr. Pierson makes a very simple calculation seem complicated.

The same answer is arrived at by simply dividing your net income by your net worth, thus giving you your "return on investment."

In all cases, you will get the exact same answer.

Robert T. High
LeMans Speedway

[Ed.—That's not always true. According to Dr. John Malone, upon whom the business profitability article was based, your one-step calculation for figuring return on investment does not take into account the time-value of money. The operator must remember that he is looking for a flow of income over a period of years, not just for one year. If an operator's machines have a lifespan of just one year then, yes, your formula would ring true. But, generally speaking, operators expect their machines to continue earning money after the first year, and your calculation does not take that into consideration. Also, the formula described in the article gives the operator a way to analyze his whole business profitability picture whereas your formula does not provide that opportunity. And, finally, there is nothing to be gained from a short-cut method, especially if it's not always true. The extra time invested in the "complicated" formula is well worth it.]



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Tribunal requires location lists

Jukebox operators across the country are still reeling from the major setback they received at the hands of the Copyright Royalty Tribunal. September 6 the five-member panel handed down a ruling which requires operators to disclose their jukebox locations to facilitate the distribution of royalties under the new jukebox copyright law.

That new law, which went into effect January 1, requires operators to pay eight dollars per jukebox per year as payment for the right to use the copyrights of the records played in the jukeboxes. The money collected under this law is then disbursed to the three performing rights societies—ASCAP, SESAC, and BMI—which own the copyrights.

However, when the Copyright Tribunal made its ruling concerning location listings, it stopped short of giving ASCAP and SESAC everything they requested, which was also to be allowed access to the interiors of the phonographs to check the popularity meters. Notably, one of the performing rights societies, BMI, sided with the operator's national association (AMOA) in saying that location listings and checking the

phonographs' interiors was not necessary and was, in fact, duplicating information already available in the music charts of the trade magazines.

Thomas Brennan, chairman of the Tribunal, told PLAY METER that one of the main reasons the Tribunal did not give the performing rights societies the right to access to the interiors of the machines is because the Tribunal "did not want to place an undue burden on the operators." When asked if in fact didn't location lists place an undue burden and jeopardize the business confidentiality of operators, Brennan said it was the opinion of the Tribunal that the lists were not necessary confidential information and that the requirement did not place an undue burden on operators.

Brennan did say, however, that the Tribunal would possibly entertain a motion from the A.M.O.A. which would stipulate that the location lists be used only for the one purpose of locating jukeboxes and that a violation of that principle by any performing rights society would constitute its forfeiture of any royalties for possibly a year.

Presently there seems to be a

question as to whether or not the Tribunal has given operators enough time to comply with the new regulation. Operators who have already registered their jukeboxes have until November 1 to supply the Tribunal with location lists, and operators who registered their jukeboxes after October 1 have ten days from that time to come up with the lists. It appears, however, that there may be an attempt by someone before that date to obtain an injunction and then test the new ruling in court.

Brennan also said operators will not have to supply location lists at the beginning of each year when they register their jukeboxes, but rather will have to come up with the location lists by October 1.

According to a recent estimate by the Copyright Office, most jukeboxes still remain unlicensed. The Copyright Office estimates that about 268,000 jukeboxes are operating in the United States without a license and that only 132,000 jukeboxes have secured licenses. This represents a collection in royalties of only \$1.1 million. The Copyright Office was anticipating a pool of \$4 million in royalty collections.

AMOA defends mailing

The A.M.O.A., in its monthly newsletter (*The Location*), defended its actions of mailing out jukebox licensing forms to member operators when the jukebox copyright law went into effect in January.

The national association had come under some criticism by member operators who, although registering their jukeboxes, felt that such a mailing by the A.M.O.A. was not the proper function of the association. The mailing, these operators contended, gave the impression that the A.M.O.A. was not looking out for the best interests of the operators but was serving the opposition instead.

However, the response in the monthly newsletter pointed out that many association members also felt that the A.M.O.A. also stood to be criticized for failing to inform its members if it had not mailed out the applications.

Simplify, simplify, and

Now that operators have had more than six months to live with the new copyright law, more and more operators are saying that it is difficult at best to comply with, that it is too complicated, and that compliance would be much greater if the requirements for obtaining licenses were simpler.

Recently the A.M.O.A. had asked its operator-members for their comments on the implementation of the new law, and operators let loose with a barrage of complaints about the new law.

What purpose is served, many of them asked, by requiring the manufacturer's name and serial number of each jukebox when applying for licenses? And why must the whole thing be further compli-

cated by prohibiting the transfer of licenses from one machine to another when a machine is sold or pulled off the route and another put in its place? Would there really be such a great loss of revenue, many of them asked, if they were permitted to transfer certificates from one machine to another?

"I have fifty machines," explains one operator, "and I buy 50-plus licenses; some extras to cover anticipated additions to my route, but if I sell some machines or if I make replacements, it would be much simpler to transfer licenses from one machine to another. The main thing is to keep my machines licensed." Another operator summed it up this way: "I believe that there would be better compliance if all an operator had to do was send in a check for a

AMOA plans two-part seminar

The A.M.O.A. trade show this year will feature a two-part seminar series with the first half being devoted to the controversial jukebox copyright law and the second half devoted to amusement center operations.

Panel members for the copyright law seminar will be Susan Aramayo, chief of the licensing division of the U.S. Copyright Office, and Nicholas Allen, A.M.O.A.'s chief counsel. Operators will be given the chance to voice their opinions and to ask questions about the new law, since it will be mainly a question-and-answer session.

The amusement center panel discussion will be made up of three manufacturers and a monitor who will try to cover the following

subjects: (1) how to make money with existing amusement center equipment; (2) what to do with the obsolete amusement center equipment; (3) what is a good mixture of pins, video, and game equipment; (4) what is the correct placement of equipment (that is, how can an operator create the proper flow of traffic in his arcade and what is the best location for the change counter; (5) what makes for a good location; and (6) what is the future of amusement centers.

In addition, the A.M.O.A. has announced that it has already booked some entertainers for the annual banquet stage show November 12.

The Ritchie Walton Revue—a

17-member musical troupe which performs everything from jazz to country, pop, patriotic, and Broadway songs—will be on hand to entertain. Also country saxophonist Tommy Wills has already been signed to appear at the festivities.

Billy Kelly, after an absence of three years, will once again emcee the production.

The ladies luncheon will feature singer Renee Matthews who will perform with a piano accompaniment.

The exposition is slated for November 10-12 at the Conrad Hilton Hotel and is considered to be the highlight event for the coin machine amusement industry in the United States.

Bee Gees, Crystal Gayle win JB Awards

The Bee Gees, with its many hit songs from the movie "Saturday Night Fever," has copped this year's JB (Jukebox) Award as artists of the year. But it was Crystal Gayle's "Don't It Make My Brown Eyes Blue" which, by drawing more votes than any other single release, won the JB

Award for the top record of the year.

Five JB Awards are given annually by jukebox operators across the country in recognition of the year's top earning records. Operators make their selections in an annual balloting conducted by the A.M.O.A., the industry's national association.

A.M.O.A. President Don Van Brackel will make the award presentations November 12 before the banquet stage show that marks the conclusion of the A.M.O.A.'s annual trade show at the Conrad Hilton Hotel in Chicago.

In the other three categories, Debbie Boone's "You Light Up My Life" won the award for the top pop record of the year, Bonnie Tyler's "It's a Heartache" was named the top country record of the year, and "Boogie Night" by Heatwave was picked the top soul release for jukeboxes.

In last year's balloting, Kenny Rogers's smash hit "Lucille" garnered three of the five awards, the first time any record has accomplished that feat.

Other single records which were nominated by the A.M.O.A. Awards Committee as finalists in the balloting were as follows: "Heaven's Just a Sin Away," Kendalls; "You're the One," Oak Ridge Boys; "Blue Bayou," Linda Rondstadt; "Use ta be My Girl," O'Jays; "Brick House," The Commodores; "Lady Love," Lou Rawls; "You're the One That I Want," Olivia Newton-John and John Travolta; "Here You Come Again," Dolly Parton; "I Just Want to be Your Everything," and "Shadow Dancing," Andy Gibb; and "Night Fever" and "Stayin' Alive," Bee Gees.

simplify some more

total number of licenses and then place them on any machines he wanted to without worrying about serial numbers—the less amount of paperwork the faster an operator would be able to comply."

There have also been strong complaints on the requirement of a certified check. One operator has said that paying the copyright fees by certified check at the beginning of each year is a fair request, but subsequent payments by certified check for two or three machines forces an additional fee on the operator. The question is asked: Why couldn't the Copyright Office accept a company check at this point? Even the IRS accepts personal checks.

Objections were particularly heavy in the area of the possibility of

location list requirements (which had not been decided upon at the time of the A.M.O.A. survey. See the lead story of this issue for the Copyright Royalty Tribunal's unfavorable ruling on that matter).

Operators objected to location lists on the grounds that this is confidential information, to say nothing of the fact that it would be a burdensome job, adding more paperwork, red tape, and expense.

Again and again, the question operators asked was: "Why can't they keep this thing simple? We want to comply with the law," many operators said, "and we are trying, but the procedure is burdensome. The A.M.O.A. survey results also reported that small operators, in particular, found the requirements counter-productive.

Reward offered for stolen equipment

There's a \$2,000 reward for anyone having information leading to the arrest or conviction of the persons who highjacked a forty-foot trailer loaded with coin-operated amusement equipment September 13.

The trailer, which was being off-loaded at Universe Affiliated in Hillside, New Jersey at the time of the theft, contained 95 machines.

F.B.I. and local law enforcement authorities reportedly have suspects in the case but have as yet been unable to apprehend them. Authorities believe the trailer was headed south, possibly for either South Carolina or Tennessee.

Operators should note that twelve of the stolen games are without backglasses since they had already been unloaded before the theft took

place.

The stolen equipment (and the number of each) is as follows: *Dealer's Choice* (3), *Oxo* (3), *Fantastic* (2), *Dipsy Doodle* (2), *Firecracker* (2), *Champs* (10), *Amigo* (23), *Rogo* (21), *Air Aces* (23), *Wizard* (5), *Four Million B.C.* (1).

Persons with information should contact Barry Feinblatt of Universe Affiliated at (201) 686-5163.

Seven-Point Checklist

The following seven points were compiled by the Music Operators of Michigan and present an excellent checklist of arguments locations owners should be aware of before they purchase their own amusement equipment:

Mr. Bar Owner, are you considering buying your own amusement machines, vending machines, or jukebox? If you are, please give consideration to the following points.

1. If owning your own equipment was such a great idea, every tavern owner in the state would own his own equipment. The reason this hasn't happened is because the experienced tavern owner knows he makes more money in the long run with an operator.

2. The contract you sign with a fast talking salesman is immediately sold to a finance company who is under no legal obligation to keep any promises made to you by the salesman. The salesman has his money. Since the promise of service is free, can you give any reason why, when you are having trouble with your machines on a Friday or Saturday, a service man would drive 100 to 150 miles round trip to fix your machines. For that matter, why would he ever fix your machines?

3. Contracts have been found which do not conform with the truth in lending laws. The reason being, the interest charges are at 18½ percent and in some cases equal to 25 percent. They do not want you to see these interest rates because a kick-back of 4 or 5 percent of the interest charges is given back to the seller. The higher the interest he can charge you, the more money he makes. That is why the interest rate is hidden. The fine print in these contracts often stipulates that in case of non-payment, the finance company can attach your property or bank account if they feel the equipment is not worth the balance owed.

4. Exorbitant prices with mark ups of 300 and 400 percent are common. The equipment sold is in some cases foreign imports of low quality, in which case, parts and supplies are hard to obtain. Depreciation on equipment is very rapid. Often you can owe much more than the equipment is worth. They tell you that owning your own equipment will add to the value of your tavern. A knowledgeable tavern buyer knows that non-operator equipment is a detriment to his business and does not want the equipment you have paid for so dearly.

5. In most cases, your operator has done business with you for five, ten, or even twenty years and is a local businessman. Who should you believe? The man you have found trustworthy and reliable and have known for a long period of time, or the man you have seen two or three times and is selling "Pie In The Sky."

6. One of the favorite ploys of the high pressure salesman is to tell the prospect not to call his operator in advance about removing his equipment. The salesman says this will prevent the operator from removing his machines before the new equipment can be installed. Actually, the real reason is because the salesman is afraid that if he allows the tavern owner to call his operator before the new machines are installed, the operator will tell the tavern owner the truth about the equipment he is buying and that will stop the sale.

7. If you are convinced about buying your own machines, you owe it to yourself to talk to your operator. He may save you thousands of dollars. He can refer you to hometown people who have been taken in by this sales pitch. Talk to them and judge for yourself.

M.O.M. initiates ad program

The Music Operators of Michigan, along with its sister association, the Michigan Tobacco-Candy Distributors and Vendors Association, has initiated an education and advertising program aimed at stopping location owners from buying their own amusement equipment.

Two advertisements which have been distributed to member operators (and, ultimately, to their locations) present capsulized arguments about why locations are better off with an operator than they are with owning their own equipment.

One advertisement shows a breakdown of each amusement dollar—with the location getting its fifty percent share and the operator—after his expenses, taxes, new equipment purchases, etc.—pocketing only five cents from that amusement dollar. Then the advertisement asks, "Is it worth it to you—the break-ins, pilferage, taxes, license fees, repairs, and maintenance—for an additional five cents on each dollar?" The other advertisement warns location owners about high-pressured sales tactics used in selling over-priced equipment to locations on the promise that the equipment will earn large profits for them.

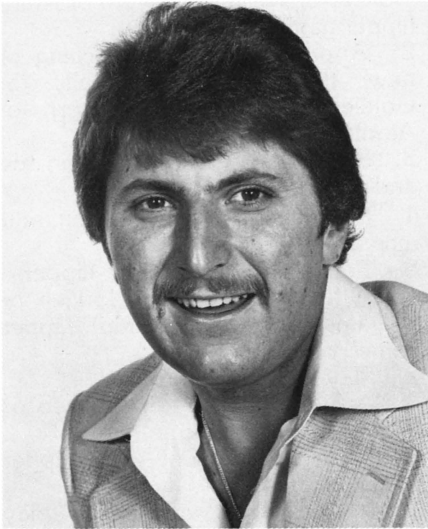
Also, the M.O.M. education program includes a seven-point checklist of things location owners should consider before they buy their own equipment.

QUOTABLE:

To err is human; to really foul things up requires a computer—Anonymous

Confusion reigns over world pool tournament

By David Snook



Michael Farley

No one seems to be certain that the World Pool Tournament is actually going to be held—except the promoter.

A great deal of confusion reigns over the arrangements for the competition, which initially was to have involved three continents.

It began last year when Australian Michael Farley, representing Professional Promotions International, a company with offices in Australia, Hong Kong, the United Kingdom, and the United States, took the first steps to a world series.

He set an Australian competition rolling and then made extensive tours of the United Kingdom arranging a British tournament. The winners from the Australian and British tournaments were to link up with winners from separate United States and Canadian tournaments for a Grand Finals to be held in Hong Kong earlier this year.

Doubts about the tournament set in when the British competition had reached only local finals. The British organizing company, Herpol Ltd., of

London, and sponsors, W.D. and H.O. Wills Ltd., a major cigarette manufacturing company started to encounter problems.

The problems culminated in late August with Herpol contacting regional co-ordinators with the decision that it was not possible that the British championships could be brought to a conclusion.

In its letter the company said that Professional Promotions International had encountered difficulties and serious delays in the U.S.A. As a result, they said, the finals in Hong Kong could not take place until mid-1979, and there was a danger that they would have to be postponed indefinitely.

Each local winner involved in the British competition so far, would be sent a small trophy and some complimentary cigarettes by Wills.

This sparked off a violent reaction, particularly from the National Pool Council, the players' organization, based in Yorkshire, which called upon the Minister for Sport, Dennis Howell M.P., to insist that all major pool competitions should be scrutinized and approved. Council secretary, Johnny Maylett, said in a press conference: "It's a terrible thing to happen to the game. It will make players very wary of future competitions and this is why the Council wants to have all future contests vetted."

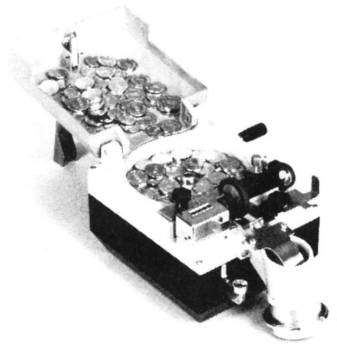
The apparent disbanding of the tournament also led to critical publicity in the British national press and this, in turn, led to a letter from Farley's Los Angeles office which threw things into further confusion.

Farley protested in his letter that he was "amazed to read how the pool-playing public in Britain could have been so misinformed about the competition—a qualifier in the World Eight Ball Pool Championships to be held in Hong Kong.

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ly 25,000 pool players participated in this event in the U.K.—surely an overwhelming response for any tournament held in the U.K. in its first year.”

Farley alleges that the tournament is “very much alive” and that only P.P.I. can make the decisions regarding the international competition and not Herpol Ltd. or W.D. and H.O. Wills.

“There has simply been a time change made to the world finals being held in Hong Kong because of legal formalities in the U.S.A. The world finals will take place in mid-1979 and the U.K. winners will be invited to play off against winners from other parts of the world. The U.S.A. section of the tournament known as the “Las Vegas Open” is due to commence shortly after a great deal of time and expense. We now, after nearly twelve months, have the appropriate approvals from government departments to commence.”

He ended: “I trust you will convey to the pool players in the U.K. that there is very much going to be a world final in Hong Kong and the singles and doubles winner will be invited to compete.”

Herpol Ltd., however, as British organizers had heard nothing from Farley apart from receiving a copy of the letter to the British press. Chris Albrow of Herpol said: “We are just as confused as everyone else. We were given to understand that there were serious difficulties over the American stage of the competition.”

He added that it had proved impossible to contact Farley as the telephone number and address on his notepaper in Los Angeles had proved to be out-of-date.

A B.B.C. radio program “Check-point”—a topical news-discussion program—took up the subject with a series of interviews with players, location owners, co-ordinators, Herpol and the National Pool Council which brought out a great deal of criticism of the tournament and its organization.

The B.B.C. investigator had managed to contact Farley in California by telephone during the program and Farley confirmed that the tournament was to continue, that there was to be world finals in mid-1979 and that he would personally see to it that the British stage was completed with the winners taking part in the world finals.

A week after that program, however, Herpol said that they had still not managed to contact Farley—and the whole issue remains just as confusing.

A pinball game is its best advertisement

By Louis Boasberg

It distresses this writer that manufacturers have neglected a part of a flipper game, a video game, and a shuffle alley that could be put to better use. I refer to the door of the back light box. Here is an empty space that could be used to better advantage than being just a blank space, for example, a clever advertising message or motto which may attract potential players or even potential operator customers.

I believe the manufacturers have neglected the rear of a pinball game and other games as they believe that the majority of games are operated with their backs to a wall, and for the most part, this is true. However, there are thousands of games operated with the back of the game in full view of the public, and it is not a very aesthetic view to say the least.

Here are some suggestions for lettering that could be screened or stenciled on the back doors of the back boxes on all flippers, video

games, and shuffle bowlers.

1. “Another famous Bally (or Gottlieb or Williams or Stern or Atari) flipper game”
2. “Another famous (or exciting or new) flipper game by Bally (or Gottlieb or Williams or Stern or Atari)”
3. “Play flipper games for clean fun and amusement”
4. “Play flipper games for fun and recreation”
5. “For fun and skill play flippers”
6. “A famous Bally (or Gottlieb or Williams or Stern or Atari) flipper game”
7. “Play flippers for fun”
8. “A Stern (or Bally or Gottlieb or Williams or Atari) game”
9. “Electric excitement—play flipper pinball games”
10. “For solid state fun—play pinball”

Maybe manufacturers will scream “high cost, unnecessary, ridiculous,” and they may be right, but anyway, it's only an idea.

CALENDAR

November 6-7

IEEE Chicago Fall Conference on Consumer Electronics, Ramada O'Hare Inn, Rosemont, Illinois

November 10-12

Amusement and Music Operators Association, annual convention and trade show, Conrad Hilton Hotel, Chicago, Illinois

January 14-15

Music Operators of Minnesota, annual convention, Holiday Inn, Minneapolis, Minnesota

January 19-21

Oregon Amusement and Music Operators Convention, annual con-

vention, Valley River Inn, Eugene, Oregon

January 23-25

Amusement Trades Exhibition (A.T.E.) annual trade show, Alexandra Palace, England

February 2-4

South Carolina Coin Operators Association, annual convention, Carolina Inn, Columbia, South Carolina

May 11-12

Ohio Music and Amusement Association, annual convention and trade show, Columbus Hilton Inn, Columbus, Ohio

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Information of the nature we get from monthly features like this help make *Play Meter* a very valuable book for our industry."

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Past President
A.M.O.A.
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Automatic Vending Service

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Jeanne Werner
Communications Director
Wisconsin Music Merchants
Association

"I must compliment you on the articles that are written regarding various organizations and I appreciate the fact you are calling the shots as you see them.

I assure you I am going to recommend to our membership that they subscribe to *Play Meter* because I think it carries a lot of very valuable information for an operator, regardless of what area he operates in."

George A. Miller
Past Executive Director
California Music Merchants
Association

"I have just started in business and find that *Play Meter* is a must if I'm to run a successful operation."

David Lampf
President
Blip Electronic Games Ind.

"After reading trade magazines such as *Marketplace*, *Billboard*, *Cashbox*..., I must congratulate the editors and staff of *Play Meter* for publishing such an excellent trade magazine. *Play Meter* is the finest magazine in its field. It has long been overdue.

Edward J. Elum
Attorney
Elum Music Co.
Massillon, Ohio

"Recently my boss and I have been doing a great deal of studies on pinball with the use of a computer. We have compared the different features of a machine with the income it earns over a period of time. Also we have studied the playing habits of individuals and what they like in playing different pinball games. It is surprising how they correlate with your magazine. Keep up the good work."

Dan Dever
Helix Enterprises, Inc.
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"As a newcomer to this business, I am most indebted to *Play Meter* for making available to me a great deal of information about this complex and exciting industry that would otherwise have been difficult, if not impossible, to obtain. ...the way we in the industry can best show our gratitude is through our subscriptions and regular advertisements.

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Export Manager
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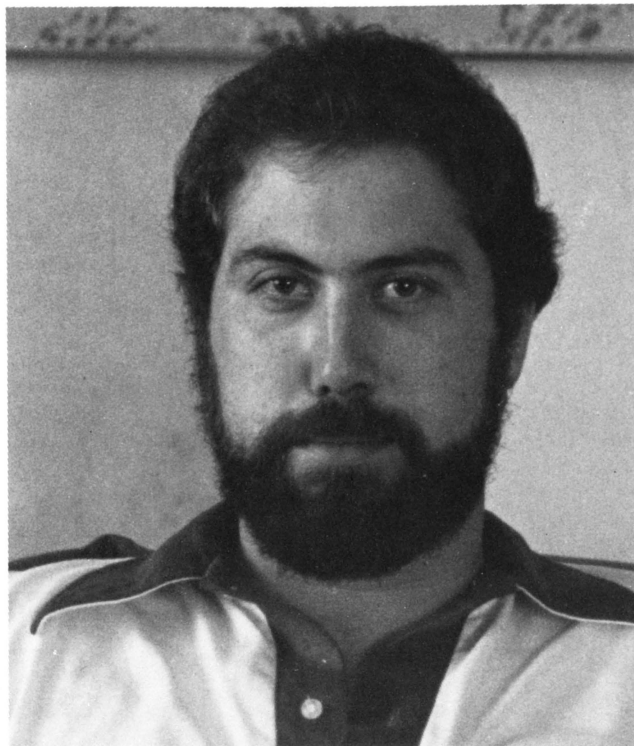


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Coinman of the Month



BILL NEMGAR

This month's Coinman, Bill Nemgar, is the chairman of the national team pool tournament which is scheduled to run from May 31 to June 2 in Rochester, Minnesota. The tournament (PM, Sept., page 11), which is being jointly sponsored by the Billiard Congress of America and Valley Manufacturing, has already registered league representatives from several states—including Minnesota, Florida, Iowa, Colorado, Illinois, Oklahoma, and Wisconsin.

And Bill, as a central figure in the whole proceedings and also as someone with hands-on experience in running pool leagues, seemed the perfect choice for a detailed description on how an operator could set up and run his own pool leagues. The advantages to such a promotion are obvious—it creates a closer bond between the operator and his pool table locations and it also helps generate additional revenue in the pool tables.

Bill joined D&R Star in Rochester, Minnesota about two years ago as a computer operator and as the billiards league chairman to help operator Dick Hawkins put together a computerized record to keep track of where his machines went, how much they were earning, and how they could reach their maximum potential. League play seems to lend

itself very clearly to that principle.

D&R Star's tournament organizer is 25 years old, is single, and his hobbies include scuba diving, underwater photography, and hunting. His education includes one year at Rochester State Junior College and another year at Drury State College in Springfield, Missouri where he majored in business administration and biology.

Charged with keeping D&R Star's more-than-twenty pool leagues running without a hitch is one of his big responsibilities, but he insists it's not that big a problem since the mark of a well-run league is one where the league runs itself and where the operator can stay out of the picture. D&R Star's diverse leagues to date have registered somewhere between 2700 and 3000 pool players for the current season which started September 25.

As for his responsibilities with the league, he says that he is in charge of setting up all the tournaments, doing all the scheduling, setting up the dates, handling the public relations, and talking with the locations.

His experience in running pool league promotions makes for some thoughtful reading for operators who are thinking about ways to put a little extra cash in the coin boxes.

PLAY METER: What are the advantages to running a pool league?

NEMGAR: First of all, it guarantees that we have our table in the location because one of our prerequisites is that a location use our table to be in our league. So this keeps the location from buying its own tables. Second, it creates a tight bond between the location and the operator. It changes the relationship between the two from strictly a business sense to a friendship business sense because the location owner sees that you're doing something for him, and he appreciates it. He realizes that the league generates business for him. We have found that bar receipts increase tremendously during league play, and this is especially significant when you realize that league play takes place on the slow nights of the week. Also, it doesn't cost the locations anything to get into the league. As for the operator, league play stimulates interest in his games in the location. On league nights, while two players are shooting, the other players are usually looking for something else to do; consequently, our pingames also experience an increase in collections during league play. And, of course, our pool table collections are going up because the players are pumping money into them. Another advantage is that the leagues are set up so that you've got to play at the different locations in the league. And that generates new business for the bars because once the people go there to shoot they know about the place and are more likely to go back there again some time.

PLAY METER: How does an operator go about starting a league?

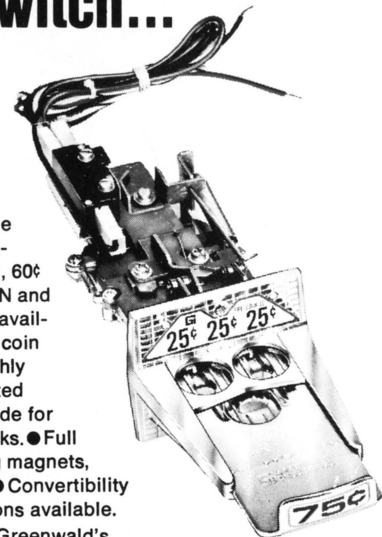
NEMGAR: If he's just starting, I suggest he start with either a six- or eight-team league, no more than that. All he has to do is ask eight different locations if they want to get into the league and, once he has that committment, all he has to do is draw up a schedule. Now that may sound like a hard thing to do but to be honest what I did was go down to the bowling alley and copy what they did. The bowling alleys have league schedules for everything from six teams to sixteen teams. So after you copy the schedules, you find out what night the locations want to shoot. Then you put the dates behind each match, just as you would a bowling schedule, and you pass this around to the bars. Now, the important factor in setting up this league is not to get involved. The operator should not get involved because it's going to create problems. Let the league run itself.

PLAY METER: How do you accomplish that?

NEMGAR: After you get your, say, eight teams for the league, you give the locations time to form their teams. Then you make up a notice and have it tacked up near the pool table or over the bar, saying there will be a league meeting on such-and-such a night. Then you bring all the teams together, explain the game rules you'll be using, then you have the players elect a president, a vice president, and a secretary. This does two things—it delegates the authority from you to the league itself and it gets you out of the mess of running the

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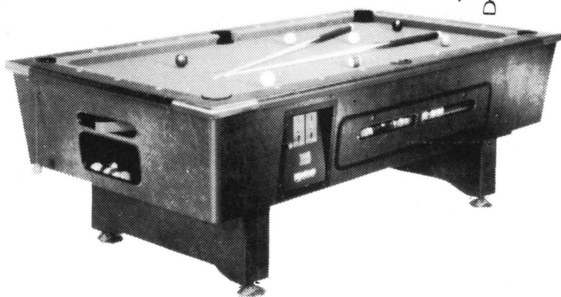
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PLAY METER: Do you charge an entry fee to get into the league?

NEMGAR: It costs two dollars per player per night. Each player from the five-man teams gives two dollars to play in the league that night. That creates a pool of twenty dollars. The players give the twenty dollars to the location. And the bar gives them back enough money to shoot fifteen games of pool. Then the rest of the money is put into an envelope along with the scoresheet at the end of the night and given the next morning to the secretary who picks it up. The secretary then deposits the money, figures out the scoresheets, ranks the teams according to their total number of games won and lost and records the point totals for all the teams. The points are important because that's how the players will get paid, according to how many team points they have. The standings are based on the total number of games won and lost, but the payback is based on the points. The reason we do this is to keep interest in the league.

PLAY METER: How do the players score points?

NEMGAR: You get one point for every opponent's ball left on the table and two points for sinking the eight-ball. So if you run the table you can get a total of nine points, but the fewest number of points you can get for winning a game is two. Now the won-lost standings are based on three matches—rounds. Each league night, the two teams line up their rosters, and the team that scores the most points in each round wins that match. There is a possibility of winning as many as three different matches in a night. So if one team scores five points and the other team scores eight points, the team scoring eight points wins the first match. But the catch is that although one team may win two out of three games, the other team may still score more points for the night if it won its game by a big margin. This point system gives the losing teams something to shoot for. In this way, a poor team can still clean house if everyone on the team plays close, even if they lose, and the one good shooter on the team runs the table.

PLAY METER: How long do the leagues normally run?

NEMGAR: For us, from late September to March, about 25 weeks. But we allow weeks off for such things as Christmas, New Year's, and Thanksgiving. We also have two position nights during the course of league play. Now, on position nights, what we're doing is forcing teams of equal ability to play against each other. In other words, the first-place team plays the second-place team, the third-place team plays the fourth-place team, and so on. We've found that that also creates interest.

PLAY METER: What is the maximum and minimum number of teams you should have in a league?

NEMGAR: The maximum is sixteen, but that is

really pushing it. The ideal number in a league is ten. Once this thing gets off the ground and starts rolling, ten is the ideal number. Now, each team is composed of five regulars and five substitutes.

PLAY METER: Normally, do you have two teams per location in each league?

NEMGAR: We'll let two teams from the same location play in the league, but no more than two because we go on the assumption that every location has only one table; and therefore, you can always schedule one of the teams home and the other one away. Of course, you must make sure that everyone gets the same amount of home and away games or else the locations will start complaining about losing business to other bars.

PLAY METER: Do some locations have teams participating in more than one league, on more than one league night?

NEMGAR: In the rural areas and the outlying towns where the populations are between, say, 300 and 3,000, the locations participate in only one league, and the players travel from one town to another. But I have some locations in the larger areas that shoot six teams every week. That's the maximum since we only run three different types of leagues—men's leagues, women's leagues, and mixed doubles. Now the mixed doubles is for four players—two men and two ladies. It was designed for the gentlemen who like to shoot pool and who like to take their girlfriends or wives along. And we've found that the women are just nutty over this one. Our mixed doubles leagues have been growing by leaps and bounds. In fact, you can put mixed leagues in almost any type of location—bowling alleys, supper clubs, game rooms. You can put them anywhere.

PLAY METER: How far apart should the locations be?

NEMGAR: It's important that all the teams in a league be no further apart than 25 miles. This is very important especially during the winter because people don't like to travel more than a half-hour to get somewhere to shoot, and they like to hang around the bar after the matches are over. And they can't do that if they're driving long distances or on bad roads and have to worry about getting home real, real late.

PLAY METER: What about substitutes? What kinds of rules do you have governing them?

NEMGAR: The teams have to have a minimum of six players and a maximum of ten players on each team. In other words, you have to have at least one substitute on the roster. And there doesn't seem to be any problem for the teams finding substitutes because there are plenty of people who don't have the time to play every week but who don't mind substituting once in awhile.

PLAY METER: After the league ends, do your collections drop considerably?

Continued on page 65

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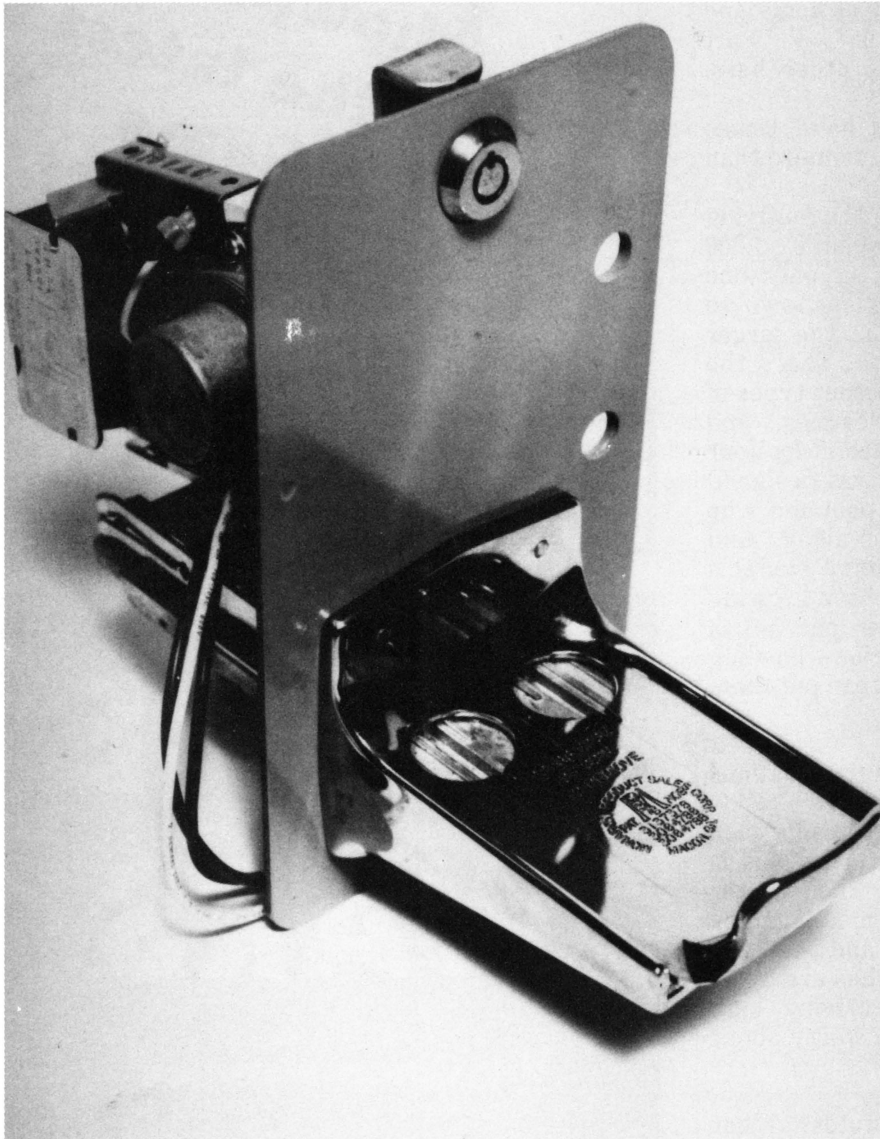
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How is 50-cent pool doing?

By David Pierson



Costs have gone up tremendously. Games cost more. Parts cost more. Labor, gasoline, and other operating expenses—all seem to be caught up in this frenzy of escalating costs. And the operator—hemmed in on one side by a rigid fifty-fifty commission split and on the other side by a coinage system which naturally restricts price flexibility—is left to carry the burden. Where is the relief, many operators ask. And, for many of them that relief has come in the form of price increases.

One coin-op piece which naturally enters into the picture at this point is the pool table. Still priced at 25 cents per game, the coin-op table appears to be a best bargain for the player when one considers how much playing time a quarter buys. With a video game, for instance, a quarter provides about ninety seconds of thrills; in pinball, it's somewhere around two to three minutes. But a quarter in a pool table can provide maybe five to seven minutes of entertainment, and with no restric-

tion as to how many players can compete.

Yes, the pool table seems to be the piece most capable of sustaining the price increase that will help the operator out of his economic pinch.

Still, a price increase is a dangerous thing. What if it doesn't take hold, and the operator is forced to go back to quarter play? If that happens, the operator loses his credibility with the location owner as a result of that, and he will find it difficult, if not impossible, to achieve other price increases at a later date.

However, some operators across the country have taken the gamble. Others are still experimenting. But, all in all, early reports appear favorable—in some areas. It should be mentioned that not all these pioneers have found happiness with 35- or 50-cent play. Some have been beaten back to quarter play, but many of them have been able to hold on to their price increases and, as a result, have registered sizeable gains.

What suggestions do these operators have for others contemplating a price increase on their pool tables? What warnings do they have? Theirs is a story that must be told.

The first response from operators who have tried—either successfully or unsuccessfully—to institute a price increase on their pool tables is that the operator can expect a whole lot of resistance from location owners. To the bar owner, a price increase means dissatisfied customers, numerous complaints, and (worst of all) lost business to neighboring taverns.

So it requires that the operator do a selling job to get the location to go along with the price increases. Said one midwestern operator who succeeded with his price change, "It was harder to get the bar owners to accept the price change than it was to get the players to accept it. The locations were afraid of losing their business. They thought their customers would go across the street to another bar."

Several other operators—also successful in their pricing changes—pointed out that the location owner is the key to it all. If he is lukewarm to

the price increase idea, chances are you will once again be operating your pool tables at a quarter a play within two months. If, however, the location owner is sold on the idea of the price increase, then the chances for success improve greatly.

One California operator put it this way, "The bar owner has got to learn to turn a deaf ear when he gets complaints about the price of the pool game. If he does, the acceptance time is greatly reduced."

To look at it another way, the location owner who openly sides with his customers will probably kill the price hike while still in its infancy. If the bar owner tells his clientele that it wasn't his idea to raise the price in the first place, that he knew all along the price increase wouldn't work, then that bar owner will probably become the self-fulfilling prophet.

Another operator, after selling his location owner on the idea of a price hike, then prepared the owner for the customer feedback he is going to get. "I try to prepare the guy for what he has to expect. Every customer is going to try to make him back away."

One operator, when explaining how he sold bar owners on the increase, emphasized that operators should not belabor the point about their own increased cost, since location owners don't look upon that as being their problem. He said, "You've got to convince the location owner that he needs more money. His rent is going up, and so are his taxes. His liquor, everything costs more. And you must sell the locations on the fact that it [the price increase] is the solution, that it will make them more money."

He also pointed out that a price increase at the pool table will probably not hurt the bar's business anyway, and bar owners who think it will are mistaken. "You've got to convince the location owner that the players go to his location not because he's got a 25-cent pool table," he said, "but because they like the atmosphere there."

One thing an operator should keep in mind, however, is that he cannot increase prices piecemeal. He cannot increase one table in the middle of town to 35 or 50 cents and keep all his other tables at quarter play and still expect to realize a gain on the higher-priced table. If an operator goes for the increase, it must cover the entire area. This does not mean, however, that he should coordinate such a price hike with other area operators because such price fixing maneuvers are illegal.

Naturally, this leads to problems, especially in large cities, where other operators have pool tables in the

immediate area. One operator in New York City, for instance, was still smarting from his ill-starred price hike. "The players rejected it completely," he said. "They all went next door to play pool. It's like anything else, if they can get it at a cheaper price somewhere else, then they'll go there. And that's what was happening to us, everyone was going next door to play pool. I don't recommend fifty-cent play for anyone. There's too much competition." He did concede, however, that an operator with a rural or semi-urban route might stand better chances of getting his price increase accepted. But as for him: "I'm back to quarter play," he said, "and I'm staying that way."

If the price hike does take hold, how long will it be before players accept the increase? Those who experimented successfully said that on the average it takes about two weeks before the customers accept the increase. Some even reported no delay at all, saying that players are used to increased prices. One operator said it took him almost two months before he realized the price increase was going to stick, and still another operator—this one's attempt to hike prices was unsuccessful—said that the immediate response he got was very favorable. He said that his earnings doubled for the first two or three weeks when his table was set on fifty-cent play, but after that temporary gain, the table began to lose steadily until it was earning even less than it was before. Within two months time he was back on quarter play.

How does the operator go about introducing the price increase to his ultimate customers, the players themselves? On this point every operator was in agreement. For the price increase to have any sort of a chance, the operator must introduce it on either a new table or a refurbished one. Otherwise, players and location owners will complain about an increase in which the only thing that changes is the coin slot. One operator has found that he can introduce the price hike by taking out a small table and replacing it with a larger one, that is, if the location can accommodate the larger size. But in an industry where there are few absolutes, that one maxim seems almost inviolable—the price increase must be accompanied by a new table.

One operator put it this way, "Any time you increase the per-play price, there's only one way you can do it—and that's with a new machine."

What types of locations are best suited for either 35- or 50-cent play on pool tables? Of course, there are

game rooms, bowling alleys, airports, and other similar types of locations which seem most likely. But as for whether or not your bars can stand the increase, one operator said that if the bar has a line of people waiting to play pool, then you can be pretty sure the price increase will take hold there.

And then there's the biggest question of all: Will it make more money?

Basically, the question is how much of a decrease in playing time did the operators experience when they adjusted their pricing to 35- or 50-cent play? Most operators who made the transition successfully reported that they experienced no noticeable decrease in playing time. "If there was a decrease in playing time," said one operator now on 35-cent play, "it was around two or three percent, and that wouldn't be reflected in our reports."

Other operators echoed the same opinion—saying they realized little or no decrease in playing time.

It appears, though, that an increase to fifty-cents will probably result in some sort of decrease in playing time. This is evidenced by two operators' responses, both of whom are now on fifty-cent play. Said one of the men, "If an operator makes the transition [to fifty cents] properly, collections should increase between 25 and 50 percent." The other operator reported an increase in collections of forty percent for his fifty-cent tables. However, several other 50-cent operators report no decrease in playing time. With 35-cent play, there seems to be unanimity—there is no discernable decrease at all in playing time.

One operator who raised his prices to fifty cents reported that his collections had doubled. He said that he gauges all his price increases by the amount of playing time he loses, and that with everything from music to video games and pinball he has found that the price increase has always resulted in a corresponding decrease in playing time so that collections stayed at about the same. But with pool tables he didn't experience the expected decrease; the playing time remained the same. "Pool is the only game," he theorized, "where people will go to a back room to play. People will seek out a pool table. Pool is the only game that people will play regardless of price."

It's a good thought, the only problem is that in some places the players do look at the price, and it's up to the sharp operator to know if, how, and when to institute that price hike to make himself a little headway.

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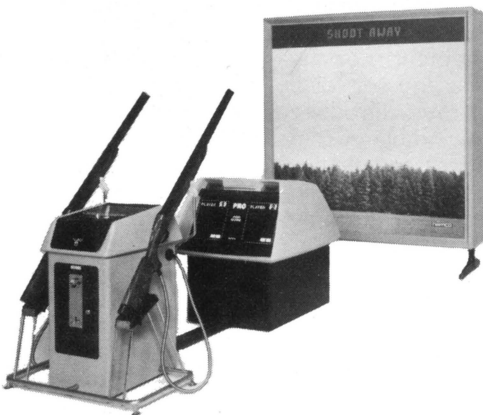
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Pool table security

(or maintaining your image as a games expert)

By David Pierson

The problem is this: locations buying their own pool tables. There is probably no worse threat to the coin-op amusement industry than a location buying its own equipment. And the piece of equipment most often purchased by them is the pool table.

The problem with locations buying their own pool tables stems from the fact that the pool table is, for the most part, a rugged piece and, at least when compared to its coin-op counterparts, seems to need very little attention.

Video games and pinball machines have to be pampered. And in return for the constant attention they receive, they reward the operator with very good earnings. But theirs is a short life. And soon they are out of the door and replaced by other machines.

But the pool table—by comparison, a largely ignored piece—continues on, earning at its steady pace. Its ruggedness is at once a blessing and curse, the curse being that some operators begin to look upon the pool table as being completely maintenance free, and this is where the problems begin.

Misled by the apparent simplicity of it all, many operators begin to abbreviate the attention they give their pool tables. But what these operators don't realize is that when they concern themselves with only what's inside the coin box, they are demonstrating for the location owner that a pool table is an easy piece to

maintain, that almost anyone—including the location owner himself—can own a pool table and operate it successfully.

Of course, this is not the case. A poorly-maintained table invariably will earn less than it could if it were kept up. This is simply because many players will be turned away from shooting if the cue sticks are warped or cracked, or the tips are flat, or the table is dirty or unlevel.

The whole reason the location owner agreed to having the operator put his pinball machines and jukebox and pool table in the location in the first place is because the location owner looks upon the operator as a sort of "games expert." But if the operator demonstrates that there's nothing to operating a pool table (or any other piece of equipment) then the location owner is just naturally going to start thinking about ways to get the whole pie rather than just fifty percent of it. Of course, if the location owner buys his own table, chances are he won't be able to keep it well-maintained. But if the operator hasn't been keeping his table well-maintained, how is he going to be able to show the bar owner that he shouldn't own his own table?

It's necessary, therefore, for the operator to show the location owner that he is interested in maintaining all the equipment he puts in the location, and that includes the pool table.

The pool table is an especially

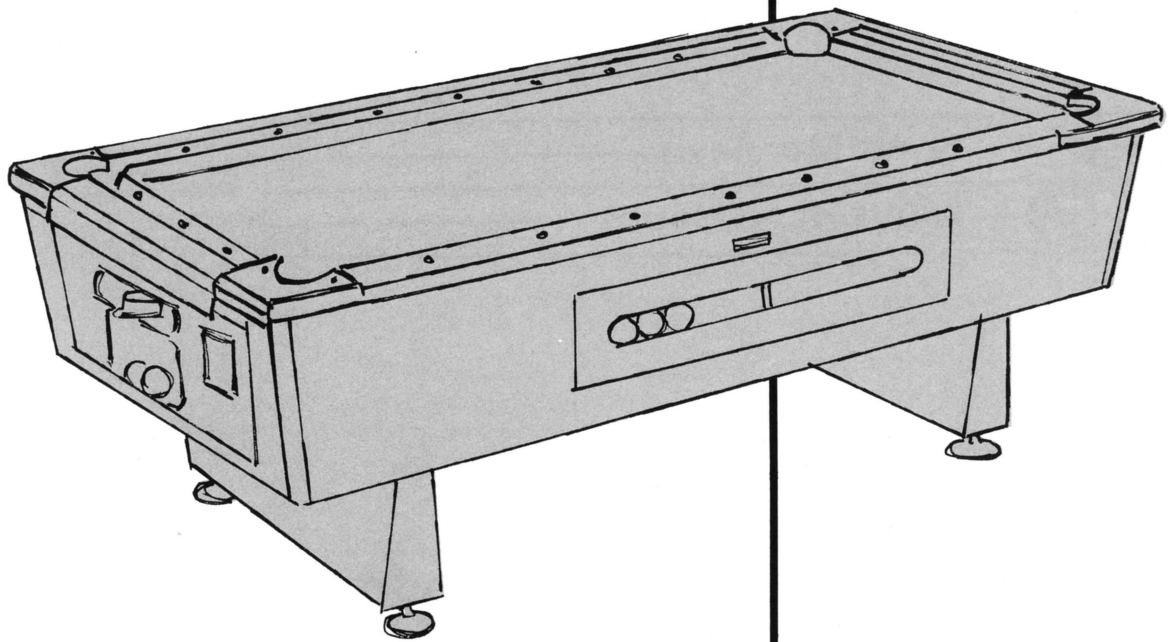
important piece to the operator because it's such a steady earner. As one operator once put it, "Pinballs come and pinballs go, but my pool tables pay the bills."

Another operator summed it up this way: "The pool table is the cream of my route. Without it, all I have left is the chalk." It is up to the operator, therefore, to protect his "cream."

Some operators do this by using the pinball machines and video games as a wedge to getting their pool tables into a location and keeping it there. One operator said that if the location threatens to buy its own table, then he tells the location owner that it's an all-or-none proposition—if the pool table goes, so do the pinball machines and the jukebox. But this can be self-defeating if the location owner opts for the "none" part of the proposition. And the "hard-liner" operator will find himself out of the location, and another operator—happy just to get his pinballs and jukebox in there—will take his place in the tavern.

So a solution like that is a dangerous one; but, of course, it's far better for the operator to avoid the confrontation in the first place by not leading the location owner into thinking that pool table operation is a simple thing.

There are several ways to insure against pool table locations going sour. One proven method is to set up an ongoing promotion, such as a pool league (see this month's Coinman interview for a detailed



description on how they are run). Pool tournaments and leagues are something that a location owner cannot provide himself, and it has the added advantage that it keeps the location owner aware that he needs an operator-run pool table in his location.

But, back to the original proposition, the best tried-and-true method of hanging onto pool table locations is to keep the pool tables maintained.

This should include brushing the table cloth every week, including underneath the cushions. The operator who skips this little bit of housecleaning is asking for trouble.

Another practice which should be done on a weekly basis is replacing the cuetips. Some operators don't change these as frequently as they should, but, again, it's a simple process that shows the location you're interested in them. Also, if your routemen get in the habit of changing the cuetips every week instead of "when they need it," they will be less likely to overlook or forget pool table maintenance.

Other routine practices should include cleaning the cue ball (since it is always dirty with chalk marks) and replacing worn-out spots on the table.

Another practice, which may be more busy-work than anything else but which shows the location owner that you're looking out for him, is checking out the ball track.

Also, your routemen should be in

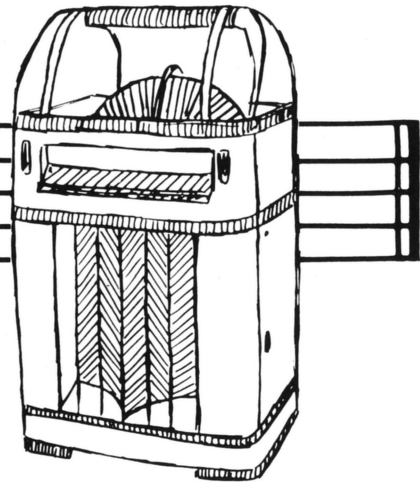
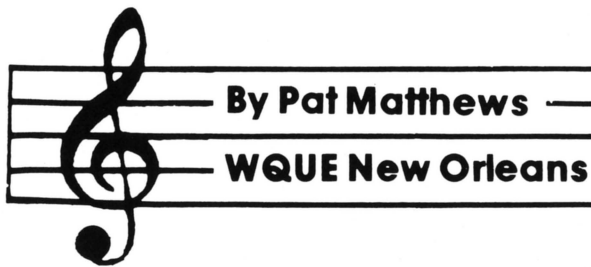
the habit of cleaning the pool table cabinets with soap and water from time to time.

One other thing. Before he goes, your routeman should check with the location owner to see if he has enough chalk, or if he's holding any broken or cracked cue sticks.

Then, of course, the pool cloth has got to be changed on a timely basis. The average interval between cloth changes for most operators is anywhere between four and six months; it really depends upon the wear-and-tear the table gets. As one operator put it, "I change the pool cloths *before* they need it."

All these maintenance habits are, of course, self-evident to any knowledgeable operator, but the time to remind yourself of their importance is now—before it's too late and before the location owner springs it on you that he's bought his own table.

Finally, the operator should not use the pool table as a "loss leader" to get his other equipment into the location. The operator who agrees to lease a pool table to the location, in exchange for putting in his pinball machines and jukebox, is saying that the location owner can do as good a job of maintaining the pool table as he can. And that's a bad business tactic, not only from the standpoint of the lost revenue, but also because it erodes the confidence the location owner has put in you as a games expert.



October Rush

Here it is, Fall again. Considered by some to be the most picturesque time of the year. Football on all levels is in full swing, the leaves will soon change hues and drop from the branches which have given them life since the Spring, and Winter is waiting around every turn. Autumn is nice in so many ways, and it brings a bonus in the record/music business. You see, the cutoff point for a record to be considered 1978 vintage is somewhere near the end of October. So the rush is on from now until then. Think about it and you'll realize that the best songs are released from June until around the start of November. Which leads me up to a powerhouse of product this time out.

Ready To Take A Chance Again—Barry Manilow—Arista AS 0357
Gimbel and Fox, songwriters extraordinaire, have been around awhile. Manilow just doesn't let up.

In case you didn't know, this tune is from the movie, "Foul Play." It's a tender love ballad, heavy on violins and swelling background chorus, handled as only Barry Manilow can. The lyrics are touching—strictly a female grabber, once again. (B-Pop) (A-MOR)

Do You Feel All Right—KC and the Sunshine Band—T.K. TK 1030
It's about that time again. Time for the kings of boogie funk to lay another one on us. And that's exactly the vehicle here. It's a blending of their oh so familiar rhythm with just a little more emphasis on the horn section. The percussion break is also effective but the record fades on it—bad. If I were producing I would have had the horns come back in, stronger than ever—then fade out. Then again if I were producing the Sunshine Band, I wouldn't be writing this. They'll keep on dancin' at any rate. (A-Pop) (A-R&B)

Don't Want To Live Without It—Pablo Cruise—A&M 2076-S

This one's a not-so-typical one for this group. From the opening bass notes to the crescendo of the ever-present synthesizer you get the feeling of a change in direction, musically speaking. The trademarks of Pablo Cruise do find their ways into the music later. Those being the excellent vocal harmonies, and some of the finest production work around today. It should also be a typically strong record for a group with a reputation for hits. (B-Pop)

Flying High—Commodores—Mo-Town M 1452 F

From the same album that brought us the sentimental love song "Three Times A Lady" it's a medium, up-tempo love song that's certain to catch a lot of people off guard. It's heavy on brass (Some of the finest horn work I've heard), with intricate chord changes, strings and super sensational vocals. One listen and

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you'll be flying high with this definite chart topper from these talented guys from Alabama. (A-R&B) (A-Pop) (B-MOR)

Night Music—Lorna Wright—Rocket JH-11307

A newcomer with an easy sound. A perfect combination for a sleeper this season. It's basically acoustic with just a taste of country. To say it's the perfect record for an evening on the front porch would be an understatement—there's even an over-dub of cricket sounds in key parts. Ms. Wright has an incredible voice—along the lines of Olivia-what's-her-name. And that ain't too bad! (B-Pop) (A-MOR) (B-C&W)

Theme From Battlestar Galactica—Maynard Ferguson—Columbia 3-10823

The hit of the television season could very well spawn a reasonable musical hit. Of course, it doesn't hurt to have the likes of Maynard Ferguson pushin' your product. This one has been pulled from what, in my opinion, is his finest lp to date, *Carnival*. With just a taste of "Star Wars" (I hope this doesn't add fuel to the fire which already exists because of the video) sound this waxing stands well on its own and is worth listening to and buying just to hear the genius of the horn *one more time!* How does he hit those notes!?! (C-Pop) (B-MOR)

Into The Night—Toby Beau—RCA JH-11388

Not "My Angel Baby" by any stretch of the imagination, it's interesting to say the least. Shades of the Eagles, it's a story about being taken in by a senorita down in Mexico. The arrangement is almost to the point of being second to none, strings accent every "peak" and there's that similarity to Glenn Frey's boys, particularly in the vocal department. Watch this one fly like an eagle, so to speak. (A-Pop) (B-C&W) (A-MOR)

Only You—Teddy Pendergrass—Philadelphia International ZS8 3657

The best way to describe this singer and his record is H-O-T!! Teddy fills the speakers with sheer grit emotion ("ain't never had nobody give me the key to their door"). The former lead singer for Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes shines his brightest since going solo on this movin' gutsy tune. A saxophone solo highlights the middle eight break. Now here's a record goin' places. (A-R&B) (B-Pop)

Change of Heart—Eric Carmen—Arista AS 0354

Every once in a while a song comes along that just knocks me over and this is one. It's unlike Eric Carmen in so many ways, yet typical at the same time. Like his previous efforts it features super sophisticated chord progressions and superb vocal overdubbing and these points are the keys. If the chord change in the chorus isn't enough to make you a believer, nothing will. (A-Pop) (A-MOR)

You Should Do It—Peter Brown—Drive 6272

You should and you probably will fall for this one. Hot on the wheels of his smash international success with "Dance With Me," it's another toe tapper with an infectious melody. Not as disco sounding, Peter relies on many noticeable "hooks" that have worked for him in the past: a happy synthesizer, brilliant strings and perfect percussion. Chalk up another biggie for this entrepreneur of the current music scene! (A-Pop) (A-Disco) (A-R&B)

Back In My Arms Again—Genya Ravan—20th Century Fox TC-2374

It's certainly distinctive. So much so, that Holland-Dozier-Holland and the Supremes would never have given any thought to this arrangement. Yet Ms. Ravan and company bring back the song as well as visions of Janis Joplin singing Motor City

soul. With any luck this could be the first commercial success for Genya Ravan. (C-Pop)

Ain't No California—Mel Tillis—MCA MCA-40946

It's a song about traveling and some advice to the unwary venturer. Once again Mel is surrounded by a swell of orchestra, strumming guitars, female background singers and cliched lyrics. There are even attempts at instrumental effects (Train sounds on the steel guitar, etc.) that have been overdone. However it should do well, since Mr. Tillis is well respected and has a huge following. Besides, he doesn't stutter when he sings. (B-C&W) (C-MOR)

WORTH A LISTEN

It's Alright—Vivian Reed—United Artists

At The Disco—Rosetta Stone—Private Stock

What Goes Up—Alan Parsons Project—Arista

When You Feel Love—Bob McGilpin—Butterfly

Mellow Lovin—Judy Cheeks—Salsoul

Poinciana (Song of The Tree)—Gato Barbieri—A&M

Let Me (Let Me Be Your Lover)—Jimmy "Bo" Horne—Sunshine Sound

I Just Want To Love You—Eddie Rabbitt—Elektra

PLAY METER TOP 25

1. **Kiss You All Over**—Exile—Warner Brothers
2. **Hot Blooded**—Foreigner—Atlantic****
3. **Reminiscing**—Little River Band—Harvest
4. **Boogie Oogie Oogie**—A Taste Of Honey—Capitol
5. **Don't Look Back**—Boston—Columbia****
6. **Got To Get You Into My Life**—Earth Wind and Fire—Columbia****
7. **Hopelessly Devoted To You**—Olivia Newton-John—RSO
8. **You and I**—Rick James—Gordy
9. **Whenever I Call You Friend**—Kenny Loggins—Columbia
10. **An Everlasting Love**—Andy Gibb—RSO
11. **Who Are You**—The Who—MCA****
12. **Beast Of Burden**—Rolling Stones—Rolling Stones
13. **Right Down The Line**—Gerry Rafferty—United Artists****
14. **Hot Child In The City**—Nick Gilder—Chrysalis
15. **Get Off**—Foxy—Mainstream
16. **Hollywood Nights**—Bob Seger—Capitol
17. **You Needed Me**—Anne Murray—Capitol
18. **Back In The USA**—Linda Ronstadt—Asylum****
19. **Shame**—Evelyn King—RCA
20. **Grease**—Frankie Valli—RSO
21. **Come Together**—Aerosmith—Columbia****
22. **Fool (If You Think It's Over)**—Chris Rea—United Artists
23. **Eyes Of Laura Mars (Prisoner)**—Barbra Streisand—Columbia****
24. **Summer Nights**—John Travolta & Olivia Newton John—RSO
25. **MacArthur Park**—Donna Summer—Casablanca****

****reviewed by PLAY METER

RECORD WORLD SINGLES CHART

TITLE, ARTIST, Label, Number, (Distributing Label)

SEPT. 30	SEPT. 23		WKS. ON CHART
1	3	KISS YOU ALL OVER EXILE Warner/Curb 8589	13
2	1	BOOGIE OOGIE OOGIE A TASTE OF HONEY/Capitol 4565	16
3	2	THREE TIMES A LADY COMMODORES/Motown 1443	15
4	5	SUMMER NIGHTS JOHN TRAVOLTA, OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN & CAST/RSO 906	9
5	4	HOPELESSLY DEVOTED TO YOU OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN/RSO 903	13
6	9	HOT CHILD IN THE CITY NICK GILDER/Chrysalis 2226	15
7	6	HOT BLOODED FOREIGNER/Atlantic 3488	14
8	7	GREASE FRANKIE VALLI/RSO 897	18
9	11	DON'T LOOK BACK BOSTON/Epic 8 50590	7
10	12	YOU NEEDED ME ANNE MURRAY/Capitol 4574	13
11	14	REMINISCING LITTLE RIVER BAND/Harvest 5605 (Capitol)	10
12	15	WHENEVER I CALL YOU "FRIEND" KENNY LOGGINS/Columbia 3 10794	10
13	18	RIGHT DOWN THE LINE GERRY RAFFERTY/United Artists 1233	8
14	13	YOU AND I RICK JAMES STONES CITY BAND/Gordy 7156 (Motown)	15
15	8	MISS YOU ROLLING STONES/Rolling Stones 19307 (Atl)	19
16	10	AN EVERLASTING LOVE ANDY GIBB/RSO 904	12
17	19	HOLLYWOOD NIGHTS BOB SEGER AND THE SILVER BULLET BAND/Capitol 4618	8
18	21	LOVE IS IN THE AIR JOHN PAUL YOUNG/Scotti Brothers 402 (Atl)	12
19	22	WHO ARE YOU THE WHO/MCA 7708	6
20	20	GET OFF FOXY/Dash 5046 (TK)	14
21	16	GOT TO GET YOU INTO MY LIFE EARTH, WIND & FIRE/Columbia 3 10796	10
22	42	MAC ARTHUR PARK DONNA SUMMER/Casablanca 939	4
23	27	SHE'S ALWAYS A WOMAN BILLY JOEL/Columbia 3 10788	8
24	25	BACK IN THE U.S.A. LINDA RONSTADT/Asylum 45519	7
25	34	BEAST OF BURDEN ROLLING STONES/Rolling Stones 19309 (Atl)	4
26	44	DOUBLE VISION FOREIGNER/Atlantic 3514	2
27	46	HOW MUCH I FEEL AMBROSIA/Warner Bros. 8640	5
28	30	JOSIE STEELY DAN/ABC 12404	6
29	31	COME TOGETHER AEROSMITH/Columbia 3 10802	8
30	32	OH! DARLING ROBIN GIBB/RSO 907	7
31	33	TALKING IN YOUR SLEEP CRYSTAL GAYLE/United Artists 1214	11
32	37	YOU NEVER DONE IT LIKE THAT CAPTAIN & TENNILLE/A&M 2062	7
33	43	IT'S A LAUGH DARYL HALL & JOHN OATES/RCA 11371	6
34	35	DEVOTED TO YOU CARLY SIMON WITH JAMES TAYLOR/Elektra 45506	7
35	36	ALL I SEE IS YOUR FACE DAN HILL/20th Century Fox 2378	8
36	38	HOLDING ON (WHEN LOVE IS GONE) LTD/A&M 2057	10
37	41	I LOVE THE NIGHTLIFE (DISCO ROUND) ALICIA BRIDGES/Polydor 14488	11
38	53	READY TO TAKE A CHANCE ON YOU BARRY MANILOW/Arista 0357	3
39	40	TOOK THE LAST TRAIN DAVID GATES/Elektra 45500	6
40	28	JUST WHAT I NEEDED THE CARS/Elektra 45491	13
41	17	SHAME EVELYN "CHAMPAGNE" KING/RCA 11122	18
42	45	PARADISE BY THE DASHBOARD LIGHT MEATLOAF/Epic/Cleveland Intl. 8 50588	7
43	48	SWEET LIFE PAUL DAVIS/Bang 738	8
44	49	EASE ON DOWN THE ROAD DIANA ROSS/MICHAEL JACKSON/MCA 40947	5
45	50	I WILL STILL LOVE YOU STONEBOLT/Parachute 512 (Casablanca)	9
46	23	MAGNET AND STEEL WALTER EGAN/Columbia 3 10719	18
47	52	ALMOST LIKE BEING IN LOVE MICHAEL JOHNSON/EMI-America 8004	8
48	26	FOOL (IF YOU THINK IT'S OVER) CHRIS REA/Magnet/UA 1198	13



49	58	I JUST WANNA STOP GINO VANNELLI/A&M 2072	4
50	24	LOVE WILL FIND A WAY PABLO CRUISE/A&M 2048	18
51	29	YOU McCRARYS/Portrait 6 70014	12
52	54	BADLANDS BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN/Columbia 3 10801	5
53	60	ONE NATION UNDER A GROOVE FUNKADELIC/Warner Bros. 8618	5
54	55	5.7.0.5. CITY BOY/Mercury 73999	10
55	56	DANCE (DISCO HEAT) SYLVESTER/Fantasy 827	6
56	61	LONDON TOWN WINGS/Capitol 4625	4
57	69	SHARING THE NIGHT TOGETHER DR. HOOK/Capitol 4621	3
58	62	HOT SHOT KAREN YOUNG/West End 1211	6
59	64	YOU SHOULD DO IT PETER BROWN/Drive 6272 (TK)	5
60	66	BLUE COLLAR MAN (LONG NIGHTS) STYX/A&M 2087	3
61	70	STRAIGHT ON HEART Portrait 6 70020	3
62	57	SHAKE AND DANCE WITH ME CON FUNK SHUN/Mercury 74008	9
63	63	HEARTBREAKER DOLLY PARTON/RCA 11296	5
64	51	RAISE A LITTLE HELL TROOPER/MCA 40924	9
65	67	TAKE ME I'M YOURS MICHAEL HENDERSON/Buddah 597 (Arista)	9
66	68	PEGGY SUE BEACH BOYS/Brother 1394 (WB)	4
67	74	CHANGE OF HEART ERIC CARMEN/Arista 0354	3
68	77	EVERYBODY NEEDS LOVE STEPHEN BISHOP/ABC 12406	2
69	78	GOT TO HAVE LOVING DON RAY/Polydor 14489	5
70	79	THEMES FROM THE WIZARD OF OZ MECO/Millennium 620 (Casablanca)	3
71	82	DON'T WANT TO LIVE WITHOUT IT PABLO CRUISE/A&M 2076	2
72	47	THINK IT OVER CHERYL LADD/Capitol 4599	11
73	80	PRISONER OF YOUR LOVE PLAYER/RSO 908	3

CHARTMAKER OF THE WEEK

74 — **RAINING IN MY HEART**
LEO SAYER
Warner Bros. 8682



75	75	BRANDY O'JAYS/Phila. Intl. 3652 (CBS)	4
76	39	LOVE THEME FROM 'EYES OF LAURA MARS' (PRISONER) BARBRA STREISAND/Columbia 3 10777	10
77	86	SUBSTITUTE CLOUT/Epic 8 50591	4
78	88	CRAZY FEELIN' JEFFERSON STARSHIP/Grunt 11374 (RCA)	2
79	85	SMILE EMOTIONS Columbia 3 10791	6
80	—	DREADLOCK HOLIDAY 10cc/Polydor 14511	1
81	—	SEARCHING FOR A THRILL STARBUCK/United Artists 1245	1
82	87	LET'S GET CRAZY TONIGHT RUPERT HOLMES/Private Stock 45799	3
83	—	STRANGE WAY FIREFALL/Atlantic 3518	1
84	—	GREASED LIGHTNIN' JOHN TRAVOLTA/RSO 909	1
85	—	FLYING HIGH COMMODORES/Motown 1452	1
86	—	SOFT AND WET PRINCE/Warner Bros. 8619	1
87	—	MARTHA (YOUR LOVERS COME AND GO) GABRIEL/Epic/Sweet City 50594	1
88	98	THERE'LL NEVER BE SWITCH Gordy 7159 (Motown)	3
89	—	LISTEN TO HER HEART TOM PETTY & THE HEARTBREAKERS/Shelter 6201 (ABC)	1
90	72	LET'S START THE DANCE BOHANNON/Mercury 74015	5
91	92	I'M IN LOVE (AND I LOVE THE FEELING) ROSE ROYCE/Whitfield 8629 (WB)	4
92	94	BROUGHT UP IN NEW YORK (BROUGHT DOWN IN L.A.) PAUL ANKA/RCA 11351	3
93	—	CHAMPAGNE JAM ATLANTA RHYTHM SECTION/Polydor 14504	1
94	95	WAVELENGTH VAN MORRISON/Warner Bros. 8661	1
95	99	IT SEEMS TO HANG ON ASHFORD & SIMPSON/Warner Bros. 8651	2
96	71	LIGHTS JOURNEY Columbia 10300	6
97	59	LAST DANCE DONNA SUMMER/Casablanca 926	20
98	—	MELLOW LOVIN' JUDY CHEEKS/Salsoul 2063 (RCA)	1
99	—	BLAME IT ON THE BOOGIE JACKSONS/Epic 8 50595	1
100	—	STAND UP ATLANTIC STARR/A&M 2065	1



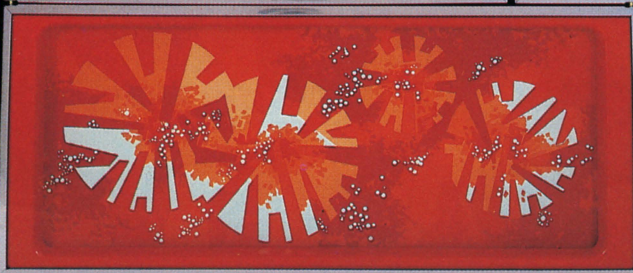
America's fastest-selling wall game inspires extreme loyalty and fierce competition.

After a little less than a year in the field, we already know what Fowl Play will do for you. It attracts a crowd of players. And it hangs on to them. In big enough numbers to frequently have a payback period of under 6 months.

Fowl Play has the drama, the challenge, and the sheer fun it takes to make a successful game. Plus a track record of minimum maintenance and fast return on investment that has inspired the loyalty of operators all over the country.



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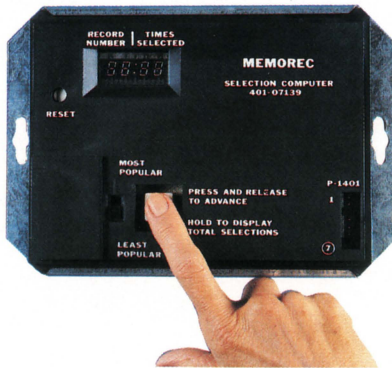
R-83 Fiesta

It's part jukebox, part ballot box.

Now every location can vote for their own top 200 favorite singles.

Our new R-83 jukeboxes have a "Memorec" computer memory that records every selection as a "vote", then tells you the total tally on a digital readout. Just press a button, and you get the exact number of times each record in the machine was selected. From the most-played record down, from the least-played record up, or as a grand total of selections since the operator's last visit.

The advantages are obvious. Not only can you tailor individual jukeboxes to specific



locations, but you can spot — early, — those records that aren't making it, or have fallen



R-83 Claremont

from favor. A feature that not only helps you program your R-83, but all others as well.

25% more power to you.

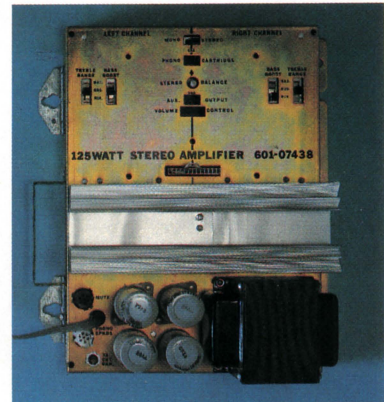
In addition to all this, the new R-83's have a new 125-watt amplifier, which is — we believe — the most powerful amplifier ever put into a jukebox. Of course, the competition advertises more watts. But our 125 rating is determined by FTC standards and is a true measure of power, actually delivering 25% more power than units advertising 200 watts. (It all means more power, and sound, to

more extension speakers.)

Fresh faces.

As you probably noticed, the new R-83's (Fiesta and Claremont) feature attractive fronts — based on the clean, no-nonsense lines of our R-82 jukeboxes.

In short, the R-83's have it all: "Memorec" computer memory, more power, great looks, plus Playmaker (that automatically plays a selection if too much time elapses between paying customers).



We're putting our money into them. We know your locations will too.

Rowe International, Inc., 75 Troy Hills Road, Whippany, NJ 07981.

 **ROWE**

**"I've eliminated
my coin-jam
service calls."**

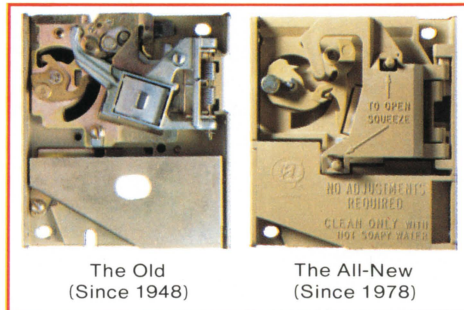


"Coinco's 5000 Series Acceptor accepts U.S. and Canadian Quarters (or U.S. Quarters, alone). It rejects slugs. It prevents coin-jams, and it can't get out of adjustment."

It's a real money maker! Coinco, the world's leading producer of coin equipment for the multi-billion dollar Vending industry, has introduced an all-new Acceptor for Amusements and Games. It was engineered to solve your coin equipment service problems. Coinco's new 5000 Series Acceptor is molded of new structural materials. It will not warp, distort or change dimensions, like the old, stamped metal coin mechanisms. It is adjustment free and never needs lubrication. The big magnet, used in out-dated coin mechanisms, was the biggest cause of coin-jam service calls. Now, the magnet is gone, never to cause another coin-jam or reduce your profits. You can choose to accept both U.S. and Canadian quarters simultaneously, or to reject the Canadian. Also available with a "thin coin

trap" on the rail, for flattened pennies, and a "string stopper" accessory, to prevent retrieval of coins attached to strings. You get greatly increased slug protection, too.

Coinco's new 5000 Series Acceptor costs less than a single service call. That's why it's cheaper and more profitable to replace all old, often-coin-jammed mechanisms now. For the name of your nearest Distributor, call your Coinco representative today. He's listed in the Yellow Pages under "Vending Machine Supplies and Parts." Or call Jim Douglass, V.P. Marketing, at (314) 664-5550.



The Old
(Since 1948)

The All-New
(Since 1978)

**coinco**

4946 Daggett, St. Louis, Missouri 63110.
In Canada: 868 Progress Ave., Scarborough, (Toronto) Ontario

Top Soul Hits

Now	Was		
1	1	GET OFF	FOXY/Dash 5046
2	2	HOLDING ON (WHEN LOVE IS GONE)	LTD/A&M 2057
3	6	ONE NATION UNDER A GROOVE	FUNKADELIC/Warner Bros. 8618
4	3	GOT TO GET YOU INTO MY LIFE	EARTH, WIND & FIRE/Columbia 3 10796
5	4	SHAKE AND DANCE WITH ME	CON FUNK SHUN/Mercury 74008
6	5	BOOGIE OOGIE OOGIE	A TASTE OF HONEY/Capitol 4565
7	7	TAKE ME I'M YOURS	MICHAEL HENDERSON/Buddah 597
8	8	YOU	MCCRARYS/Portrait 6 70014
9	9	SMILE	EMOTIONS/Columbia 3 10791
10	10	THREE TIMES A LADY	COMMODORES/Motown 1443
11	12	DANCE (DISCO HEAT)	SYLVESTER/Fantasy 827
12	13	I'M IN LOVE (AND I LOVE THE FEELING)	ROSE ROYCE/Whitfield 8629
13	18	IT SEEMS TO HANG ON	ASHFORD & SIMPSON/Warner Bros. 8651
14	11	WHAT YOU WAITIN' FOR	STARGARD/MCA 40932
15	17	THERE'LL NEVER BE	SWITCH/Gordy 7159
16	19	SOFT AND WET	PRINCE/Warner Bros. 8619
17	14	YOU AND I	RICK JAMES STONE CITY BAND/Gordy 7156
18	23	BLAME IT ON THE BOOGIE	THE JACKSONS/Epic 8 50595
19	21	STAND UP	ATLANTIC STARR/A&M 2065
20	15	CLOSE THE DOOR	TEDDY PENDERGRASS/Phila. Intl. 8 5648

Top Country Hits

Now	Was		
1	4	WHO AM I TO SAY	STATLER BROTHERS/Mercury 55037
2	2	HELLO MEXICO (ADIOS BABY TO YOU)	JOHNNY DUNCAN/Columbia 3 10783
3	7	HEARTBREAKER	DOLLY PARTON/RCA 11296
4	6	IT'S BEEN A GREAT AFTERNOON	MERLE HAGGARD/MCA 40936
5	1	I'VE ALWAYS BEEN CRAZY	WAYLON JENNINGS/RCA 11344
6	13	TEAR TIME	DAVE & SUGAR/RCA 11322
7	11	IF THE WORLD RAN OUT OF LOVE TONIGHT	JIM ED BROWN & HELEN CORNELIUS/RCA 11304
8	8	WITH LOVE	REX ALLEN, JR./Warner Bros. 8608
9	9	PENNY ARCADE	CRISTY LANE/LS/GRT 167
10	14	HERE COMES THE HURT AGAIN	MICKY GILLEY/Epic/Playboy 8 50580
11	12	EASY FROM NOW ON	EMMYLOU HARRIS/Warner Bros. 8623
12	15	DO IT AGAIN TONIGHT	LARRY GATLIN/Monument 259
13	18	LET'S TAKE THE LONG WAY AROUND THE WORLD	RONNIE MILSAP/RCA 11369
14	16	NO SLEEP TONIGHT	RANDY BARLOW/Republic 024
15	19	CRYIN' AGAIN	OAK RIDGE BOYS/ABC 12397
16	3	WOMANHOOD	TAMMY WYNETTE/Epic 8 50574
17	25	ANYONE WHO ISN'T ME TONIGHT	KENNY ROGERS & DOTTIE WEST/United Artists 1234
18	27	AIN'T NO CALIFORNIA	MEL TILLIS/MCA 40946
19	21	'57 CHEVROLET	BILLIE JO SPEARS/United Artists 1229
20	26	ANOTHER GOODBYE	DONNA FARGO/Warner Bros. 8643

Good-bye pinball!

**Pinball problems
anywhere
should concern
operators
everywhere**

The meeting was at Riccardo's in Astoria, yet another borough of a borough of New York, and the topic as presented by Irving Holzman and Ben Chicofsky along with Teddy Blatt, was the impending doom of pinball in the Big Apple. But this confrontation isn't the beginning of the story. What is, is the benign neglect and blatant stupidity of some operators who would forfeit and jeopardize the livelihood of many honest people.

But there is even more here—the ramifications of losing a major battle in the cultural capitol of the world. So what, right? It doesn't matter that you've heard this frequent refrain before. New York is, after all, a sore spot for many who would rather ignore the festering incompetence than try to deal and rectify the wounds of the past two years.

Because let's face facts. The New York experiment has fallen flat on its face and is a gnawing reminder of what not to do if one wants to keep in the coin-operated machine business. But who really cares? Do you? Does it affect your business if New York falls victim to its own greed and impropriety, or will you glorify in the fact that you were one who said it, "was bound to happen." Write off New York and you write off any of the positive advances this industry has taken in the last decade. If you don't believe this, just wait. The words are not a threat, just a warning that the cancer of New York will spread unless something is done.

Take the case of Myles Castagna of The Marcel Companies in Enfield, Connecticut. Castagna, the general manager of TMC was kind enough to pass along some information of a brewing storm in his neck of the woods which appeared in the *Journal Inquirer* of June 17, 1978. The story was titled "The Pinball Conspiracy Threatens America" written by the associate editor of the paper, Larry Williams. In big bold type the editorial began,

"Surely one of the most pernicious forces in American life today is the conspiracy to install pinball machines in every place which used to offer some peace and quiet.

"One of the more recent sanctuaries to fall victim is the foyer at

Enfield Twin Rinks, where about 400 guys who ought to know better take the ice every week to play in the Enfield Senior Hockey League.

"It happened quite a while back, actually...maybe eight months ago... and it upset me right away. But it took me a while to recognize this pinball machine installation as part of a pattern—the Pinballing of America.

"I've had trouble convincing my friends of the threat in evidence here. Maybe this column will be the turning point in my frustrating campaign to warn the populace... pinball machines are being stuck everywhere I don't want them.

"If it's late at night and I stop at one of those little convenience groceries to buy something, I have to put up with a racket from the pinball machines.

"If I go to a tavern, looking to relax after work with a cold beer and sooth my frayed nerve endings, I can't do it. Because some jerk has installed about 75 pinball machines of all varieties of beeps and dings and whining sirens.

"Almost everywhere you go these days, there are pinball machines. They're in bowling alleys, restaurants, movie theatre lobbies, newspaper and magazine shops, and... well, you name it.

"I half expect funeral parlors to begin putting them in. How about church foyers?

"Any day now I'll come to work and somebody will have installed a pinball machine next to my desk.

"Oh, you laugh?

"Well, take this seriously and you may help avert this disaster, if it's not already too late.

"Start complaining about the noise the pinball machines make. Do it the next time you go somewhere and a pinball machine is there. Get nasty about it.

"If we all act this way, we can reverse the trend. Together, perhaps, we can de-pinball this great country of ours."

There, you've read it and maybe even grinned a bit. But this lunatic is serious, and the scary thing is that any number of his readers are probably going to follow what he's asked them to do. And if enough

It was fun while it lasted

complain, what do you think is going to actually happen to the games? Think about it because it's something that's growing across the land. And if you need more proof about the shakey ground games are on take the case of Robert Johnson of Funland Amusement, Inc. in Milwaukee, Wisconsin who took the time to write to me a few months back about the real trouble he's having not only with pinballs but also video games.

Bob wrote that the "police are doing everything they can to close my store. Two examples were their seizure of *Sprint* and *Evel Knievel* for alleged gambling for giving away a T-shirt for high score and on *Sprint* for a driving contest to award a ten-speed bike.

"As of today, the district attorney refused to issue charges for the alleged gambling, but gave me a strong warning about contest prizes in the State of Wisconsin...No one has taken the task of showing the state that pinball is a game of skill not chance, and because it is a game of skill it would not be a gambling machine.

"I would like to try on a local county district attorney level to make them aware that the outcome of today's modern pinball games is determined by skill not chance."

The thing I find so repulsively disgusting is that there's no one out there willing to help people like Bob Johnson, no one ready to answer, outraged, the editorial by Larry Williams. And so it goes on with the industry being crippled far more seriously than anyone realizes or is willing to admit.

This vile egomaniacal view of business where all are in for themselves is going to devastate and destroy this industry and it is as frustrating as hell for me to see it happening. I am disillusioned by the corruption, illegalities, deceit, and inactivity that I face when I talk to people about doing something. It is ludicrous at best to sit in on an emergency meeting of the MAA in Astoria and hear a plea for more members in order to build a solid front to face the impending doom. Nothing but nothing is accomplished, just the flow of useless rhetoric and the passage of precious time.

So what has happened in New York? Well, to sum up briefly the bizarre events is that the games are viewed, still, as gambling machines... machines of chance and not skill. The image of industry members is shrouded in the words *mafia* and *underworld*. And so a councilman by the name of Olivieri has introduced a bill to rescind the passage of the bill of 1976 that legalized the operation of pinball machines. Part of the proposal is that if the games are to continue, then more stringent penalties must be imposed. How about \$250 fine per machine that is run illegally on a first offense and \$500 fine for a second offense. But that's only the tip of the iceberg.

2000 machines (pinball) have been licensed in New York City, a place where probably ten times that amount of games are in operation and so the view continues about wrongdoing and the "rackets." And the city fathers begin to look at jukeboxes and other games and talk about putting in meters and taking 50 percent of the gross. Could you survive this in your area if it were to happen? Taxes, increased fines and confiscation and outright bans on equipment is what is in the offering for this town and others around the land.

It makes you wonder doesn't it about just how far this industry has come. I stop to think about it and realize the biggest fights are yet to come. But then it doesn't matter does it if you're in Fargo, North Dakota or Los Angeles or Chicago or Houston or anywhere other than where the trouble is? If you believe this, you deserve what is about to happen to you. Band together. That's the only solution and yet the hardest one to accomplish.

Where is the central voice that Bill Gersh proposed over three decades ago in the industry bibles? Where is the central committees funded to gear up campaigns to fight the smears and right the inequities that are continually plaguing this industry. Where are the lobbying groups on state, local, and national levels hounding congressmen and government in general over the harassment that is as much a part of this business as are the people who would do it

harm from within. No, everyone counts their profits and turns a deaf ear. It's only today that counts. Only today's bucks to count. That's the bottom line, and it stinks. It reeks of insensitivity and downright stupidity that is to be vilified and not commended.

The time has come and will continue to come until someone somewhere takes up the gauntlet to fight for the rights of what is basically a decent industry. But no, every manufacturer goes his separate way. Every distributor goes his own way and every operator just wants to make it to the next collection. And that's the root of the problem facing the coin-machine industry today and throughout its history.

Nobody cares about anything that doesn't have to do with money in his own pocket. It's enough to make anyone sick and tired.

And what happens? Well, how about a notice of hearing from the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs:

"You are hereby notified that on October 3, 1978, the Department of Consumer Affairs will hold a hearing to determine whether common show licenses can properly be issued under Administrative Code Chapter 32, Article 5, for operation of the following games or devices: *Penny Falls*, *Splash Down*, *T.V. 21* (Blackjack), *Silver Falls*. A determination that any of these games or devices may not properly be licensed under the statute cited above will be the basis for revocation of any licenses currently in force covering such games or devices."

Who, I ask you, would operate slot machines and other payout games in this day and age? Who would take a Bally home pinball machine and put in a cashbox and put it on a route thinking that they're pulling a fast one? Why aren't the people responsible being run out of the business? That's the question to ask yourself as you count the quarters at the end of the day. Someone is killing the golden goose and everyone is going to suffer the consequences. It's too bad but maybe that is what it will take for everyone to learn that you can't do

what was done forty years ago and expect to survive. There are a helluva lot of people out there just waiting for the industry to fall flat on its face. I'm not one of them. I give a damn about this business and care about the honest people in the industry who are trying to make a living in a profession they're not ashamed of. I want to see things done right and the games left alone, but it's not going to happen by faith alone. Things have to be done. A movement and groundswell has got to rise up and fight the injustices that are hurting the very core of the business. New York is not an isolated island to be left to die, but rather a place where a stand can be taken, where a show of strength can aid in the fight for the free and clear operation of games anywhere.

The writer of the *Journal* needs to have his head straightened out regarding the games in general, and a person like Bob Johnson needs whatever support anyone can give him to further the acceptance of pinball and video games. That's what the story is all about. It is not about the glories of solid state and celebrity tie-ins and marvelous tournaments and world records for endurance play or anything else. It is about the continuation of the dream begun almost fifty years ago. The dreams of the David Gottliebs, Ray Moloneys, Howard Peos, Stoner Bros., Bill Gershs, Harry Williams, Sam Gensburgs and all the rest who persevered throughout the years. It is the faith of the smallest operator and oldest distributor who year after year continue to do the best they can within the law. It is a challenge that must be taken by those brave enough to accept that everything hasn't always been right but can be in the future. It is for the dedication of a business that deserves a better fate than it has gotten. And somehow, somehow something is going to have to be done.

Stronger state associations. More support to legal minds who can fight the court battles. A public relations effort that comes from the entire industry and is funded by each and every person in the business. All this and more must be done in 1978 and forever if this business is to be around in the '80s and beyond. If not, get it while you can and find something else to do, because the wheel of fortune is about to run down, and no one but no one, not even with the purest of purpose, is going to be able to overcome the onslaught that will be unleashed upon a fragmented, disjointed multi-million dollar enterprise that will never, ever be allowed to just take the money and run.



Stacey, the March of Dimes poster girl, was the hit at the charity pinball tournament. Operator Larry Shapiro (left) presents Stacey with a special plaque. And Roger C. Sharpe (center) donated Pinball!

A Jersey Hit

Even with all the turbulence in a neighboring state, there are some good things to be done and reported. And one is what was billed as "The Pinball Tournament of the Year" held at Bowla Bowla in Bergenfield, New Jersey and sponsored by Silco Vending a division of Steerwell Leisure Corporation. Run from August 21-25, the tournament wasn't just another local bash, but rather one which tried to do some good for a very worthy cause by offering all proceeds to The March of Dimes.

As a local newspaper story reported regarding the "pinball benefit" "No question who the winner of the Pinball Tournament of the Year will be—Bergen County Chapter of the March of Dimes.

"There is no entry fee. The only money required is the quarter used to play the pinball machines. All funds from the tournament, which is sponsored by Silco Vending will help the March of Dimes toward its goal of protecting the unborn and newborn from birth defects."

What a great way to run a tournament and many congratulations are in order for Larry Shapiro of Silco who helped put the whole thing together. Prizes included an Allied Leisure *Super Picker* pinball machine, the first time I've seen people play so hard for that game, a color television and a ten-speed bicycle. But more importantly was that no one was a loser. The cause was enough for a super, super way to offer something to the community.

In terms of the tournament itself, which used four Gottlieb machines—*Cleopatra*, *Close Encounters*, *Sinbad* and *Joker Poker*—the response and

turnout were really promising for the first tourney held in New Jersey. Over 200 people tried their hands with a final round of action August 25 that held everyone's attention until the winner was decided. Much credit should go to Mike Emmerling who took his tournament soccer experience and applied the "ladder" from which the finalists either lived or died by the scores they attained. It was truly a super elimination set-up and I commend Mike on the way he used it. There was suspense, excitement, and a last game display of clutch flipping that made a winner out of John Ciurczak.

But as the newspaper story pointed out, there were no losers, least of all Stacey, the March of Dimes poster child who was a star attraction in her own right and proof that each of us can do something for those less fortunate.

To be with a little girl such as Stacey and see her own courage is something I'll never forget. My heart goes out to those who suffer from ailments they can't control, and I only wish that more were being done in the charities around the country by all members of this industry, because it's a great feeling when something is done, a feeling of satisfaction and accomplishment that maybe another disease is just that little bit closer to being conquered.

So a salute to Silco Vending for what they did during five days in August and the hope that more will get involved in such events that only benefit the industry and whatever image it hopes to have for now and into the future.

—By Roger C. Sharpe

50-cent foos makes its debut in Ohio

Shaffer Distributing Company and Tournament Soccer held a series of cocktail parties in Columbus, Akron, and Dayton for the first showing in the United States of the new TS-22L 50 cents play table.

Introduction of the new table was made by Lee Peppard, president of Tournament Soccer, and Charles Farmer and Patty Gately of Shaffer Distributing. Gately is coordinating the details at the location level for the unique \$20,000 Ohio Shaffer Distributing Tournament Soccer Championship for novices only.

The Tournament Soccer promotional team of Kenny Brown and Nick Bourdis visited each location, presenting the tournament package to both participating operators and location owners.

Participating Ohio operators include Elum Music, Massillon; Bell Music, Akron; Acme Miami, Dayton; Pioneer Services, Cincinnati; Alexander Music, Youngstown; Tora Music, Columbus; Funway Freeway, Columbus, Cincinnati, and Dayton; Gem Music, Dayton; Laughlin Music, Athens; Nine Limited Leas-

ing, Columbus; Carnival Vending, Columbus; G.C.S. Enterprises, Dayton; Atlas Music, Cleveland; Ace Vending, Columbus; American Automatic, Solon; East Side Recreation, Springfield; Vogler Vending, Piqua; Hughes Music, Springfield; Robinson Coin, Newark; Shaffer Amusement, Dayton; Sanborn Vending, Nelsonville; Lorain Music, Lorain; J.L. Hilton, Akron; Cleveland-Chicago Amusement, North Ridgeville; Acme Music Systems, Niles; Red Baron, Toledo; Fun-N-Games, Youngstown; Curry Music, Cleveland; Castle Music, Akron; R.C. Music, Lancaster; Games, Inc., Columbus; G.O. Coin Service, Columbus; Table Soccer of Cincinnati, Cincinnati; Automatic Music, Painesville; Corson Services, Dayton, Max, Inc., Cleveland; Hopkins Music, Galion; Fantasy Highland, Athens, and Big City Game Room, Columbus.

These operators represent those that are involved in the Ohio \$20,000 Tournament for novices only. Some of the operators have as high as 25 locations entered.

Shaffer, Tournament Soccer sponsor \$20,000 tourney

On September 25th, the Ohio \$20,000 Tournament Soccer Championship was kicked off by Shaffer Distributing and Tournament Soccer. The event is different from the usual Tournament Soccer championship around the country because it is for *novice players only*—no pros—and it is location-oriented and operator-oriented.

Qualification rounds are being held in 300 bars, taverns, bowling alleys, game rooms and college student unions throughout Ohio, according to Chuck Farmer, vice president of sales at Shaffer Distributing Company. They have sold and delivered 300 of the new TS-22L 50 cent play tables to operators in the state.

The purpose of this tournament is

to sell fifty-cent play and Farmer pointed out that this has been accomplished. He reports the 300 tables are on location with no problems from a player standpoint.

There are four weekly tournaments at the location level. The fifth week each location holds playoffs in two categories: open doubles and women's doubles. First- and second-place location winners will go to the Southern Hotel in Columbus and compete for \$20,000 worth of prizes.

Promotion banners, score sheets, T-shirts, rules and posters have been distributed to all the participating locations. This is the first effort of its kind in the United States, Farmer stated, and it has been tremendously successful.

Tax Clinic

QUESTION: Can an employer provide life insurance benefits to employees tax-free?

ANSWER: An employer can provide group-term life insurance coverage on his employees on coverage up to \$50,000, and the cost of providing such coverage is not included as income to the employee, although deductible to the employer.

Group-term life insurance is term life insurance which does not include any permanent insurance, paid-up value or cash surrender value, or the equivalent. The policies must be life insurance contracts which form part of a group insurance arranged for by the employer under a master policy, or individual policies within the group.

The cost of coverage above the \$50,000 limit provided by the employer is taxable as income to the employee, except when the insurance is provided for an employee who has retired or when the beneficiary under the policy is the employer. This taxable income position should be reported on the employer's W-2 statement as additional compensation in the year during which the premiums were paid.

The fringe benefit of providing group-term life insurance is available only for employees. Accordingly, self-employed persons, or partners in a partnership, cannot provide group-term life insurance for themselves, and exclude the cost of such insurance from income. Group-term life insurance is a highly desirable employee fringe benefit, since it provides life insurance, which is needed, at no cost to your employees, and although it is indirectly additional compensation, they receive it tax-free.

—By *Comprehensive Accounting Corp. of Aurora, Illinois. Comprehensive provides a bookkeeping, accounting, and tax service to over 14,000 business clients each month through a nationwide network of more than 140 franchised offices.*



Critic's Corner

Mirror,

Well, I suppose if you've already gone through what I had to say about New York and the legal environment in general, you have a vague idea of my feelings this month. Unfortunately, I'm just not very "up" right now. In fact, my feelings about pinball are shaded by all the other goings-on, although I should be getting myself ready for the fall and winter binge of games because there is a surge of production at hand that is going to inundate most of you. Everybody is producing model after model at an increased rate. And maybe this is the one bright spot in the industry since the games out now and those coming up are some of the best overall in a long, long time.

Gottlieb has two new efforts waiting in the wings which should further solidify its base in the market. Bally has some dazzle coming up with no less than three lavishly promotable games. Stern, now with an acquisition of a record company, undoubtedly will be heading in a different direction with its future games, while Williams has some extremely exciting models waiting to make a bow. Atari, quiet for some time in pinball games, shouldn't remain that way for long, although one thinks that anything up its sleeve will probably be unveiled at the A.M.O.A. As for the imports with the exception of Recel and Playmatic, not much is really in evidence on these shores. Again, the showcase seems to be the Chicago show where last year's emphasis on pingames will most assuredly continue. Even a few other companies are ready to spring some surprises on the industry. But more about the latter next month.

One word before I get into this month's line up. I had the chance to partake of a breakfast with a truly super fellow some weeks back—Louis Boasberg, and also caught his story in last month's *PLAY METER* concerning pinball art. Lou is quite

right when he talks about the "art" aspect of pinball machines, something that I have been harping about for the past five years. Collectors and pinball memorabilia fans are well-advised to look at the new glasses and start stocking up. They are unique works that have further created a special place in graphic treatments. And with Bally and now Williams sporting some internal artists, as well as the increased sensitivity to striking graphics by Advertising Posters, some very individualized styles are making their ways to a finished product that is a glowing tribute to everything that has ever been done in pinball graphics at any time in the past.

But graphics we all know are only the icing on the cake. It is the design that keeps players coming back and, although the cosmetics are drawing more attention, sound included, it's what is on the field that counts in the long run. So gauge the new games accordingly and be more critical with what you're contemplating buying, especially since the number of options open to you is ever increasing.

Look at what the games are about and try to understand whether or not your location and customers fit the level play on any given game. This also includes how you set your games, whether you're in an add-a-ball territory or a free-play region. Be fair and keep your games in good shape, although admittedly, something is lacking when it comes to quality control which is the subject of an upcoming story in the next few months—why the new games aren't quite cutting the mustard and, instead, offer problems from the very first day of operation. Anyway, on to the games at hand.

Recel's CRAZY RACE

Starting off the review parade is this new effort from Spain where the



Recel's CRAZY RACE

By Roger C. Sharpe

Mirror on the Pinball

design influence is definitely Gottlieb-oriented and, although graphically this company may be lagging behind a bit, its games all in all haven't been too bad of late.

PLAYFIELD: *Crazy Race* starts with two slightly angled lanes and a middle kick-out hole at the top of the field. There are also two targets at either side with two thumper bumpers and long kicking rubbers finishing off the top action of the game. Move down a bit and three drop targets are at the right with another target just below this set-up which neatly balance a wide, Gottlieb inspired spinner. Go to the left and a metal curved arch tops a sweep down the side that offers a lone post before one gets to a bottom that's a throwback to Gottlieb's old *Top Card*.

ANALYSIS: The play on this machine is quick, as is the case with most of the Spanish games, and offers some good shot possibilities and variations from what is being done domestically. The top, by its design, is almost a separate game with some good rebounding action possible, although most of the play is centered around the drop targets and the left side with the two tying into double bonus and extra ball possibilities, as well as some increased six-digit scoring.

One of the problems *Crazy Race* does have is a drain through the center of the field and an imbalance of features at any given point on the field. The power from the flippers is okay in general, but that intangible "feel" is missing for this reviewer as is the ability to stay involved with the play of the game. Compared to *Fair Fight*, Recel's last entry in the pinball sweepstakes, this model is an improvement over the rather linear design, but it still doesn't have the action of an *Underwater* or even a *Space Race*. The only truly "neat" shots are the left side sweep around

the metal arch and the spinner, with all others, other than the drop targets, being hope and prayer efforts. And the bottom sides, even with the double rubber posts are still a death to the average player and might best be maximized with something different.

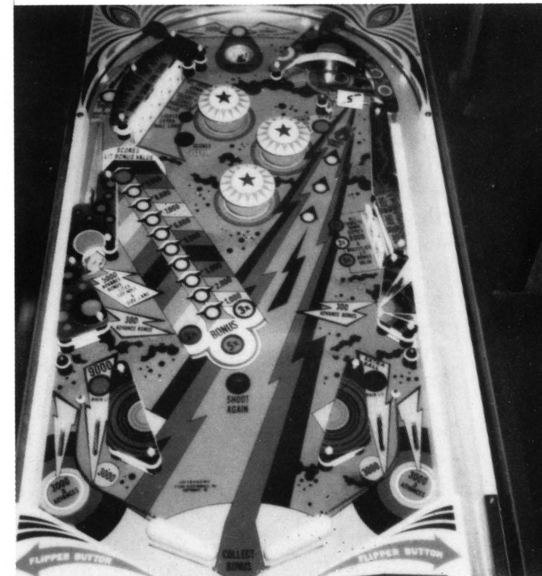
GRAPHICS: There is a certain tone and quality to Recel's graphics that aren't bad un-and-to themselves, but compared to the sparkling efforts of the competition, it's just pinball art—no more, no less. The Spanish do have a sense of color and utilize, but maybe it is the lack of contemporary themes that today's player is familiar with, which is really the problem. But *Crazy Race* will still sustain play because it is a bright and cheery game to look at and one that can be challenging if the player gives it more than a passing chance.

PLAY: Since I don't think there is substantially any difference in terms of action and bonus build-ups on five-ball versus three-ball (I've only played it as a three-ball), you might want to set the game according to what the traffic will bear. Good scoring limits for add-a-ball lands should be about 200,000 to start and 400,000 points and 600,000 finishing the card off. For free-play areas, you'll do all right to tack on an extra 100,000 points to each of these limits.

RATING: ##

Stern's LECTRONAMO

First, there was *Pinball* then *Stingray*, *Stars*, *Memory Lane*, and now the fifth solid state entry from this thriving and growing company. Initially trying for parity and acceptance, the Diversely wonders are now offering a desirable product that deserves the success and recognition it's garnered. In less than two years Sam has accomplished much and *Lectronamo* is no



Stern's LECTRONAMO

exception.

PLAYFIELD: A top kick-out hole starts the action of this four player in much the same way as *Memory Lane* saucer. But move down and there are some new wrinkles such as Stern's first full complement drop target bank with five on the left. Three thumper bumpers are at the middle positioned in such a way as to be able to supply lateral as well as up and down rebounding action. A curved metal arch and rollover button top a spinner at the right with some added balance on the left coming from a kick-back kicker that offers access just below the drop target bank as well as providing a nice touch—a cut-out groove to help balls shot from the flipper or rebounded from the side.

Move down and at the right side one finds the bonus multiplier neatly tied into a three drop target bank. At the left there's a target and the bottom is something of a Stern staple of late with rubber-ringed posts topping the wire lanes as well as the side posts.

ANALYSIS: *Lectronamo* is a nicely conceived game with a good sense of balance and interactive features. It's also the first Stern game with a 5X bonus potential that is truly limitless since the kick-back kicker allows the bonus to count down and then be rebuilt. And the side-to-side continuity is great here, with the bonus multiplier targets at the right and another set of drop targets at the left. It flows and allows for some good shots from the flippers as well as some good back hand shots.

The spinner, which adds up bonus, also works well with the rollover button at the top of the arch to light the left side lane down to the flipper. In fact, the total board is alive with many of the kickers also adding bonus points to a top of 19,000. Even the left side slightly recessed target is utilized and, when hit, lights the kick-back kicker lane as well as the top kick-out hole extra bonus point values. All in all *Lectronamo* supplies plenty of action and good skill shots throughout, although there is a tendency for a greater number of "drained" balls. But when the play is there, it more than compensates.

GRAPHICS: Mirror, mirror on the wall...it seems to be the rule rather than the exception and so it is that Stern features yet another mirrored backglass. This time a female winged centaur, or better classified anthropomorphic being graces the blue, red and yellow glass. Actually, with the

name of this game and the artwork, there truly is no theme per se, but rather just some nice use of color and the primary visual influence.

PLAY: *Lectronamo*, with its bonus possibilities really doesn't have any end limit on any given ball and for three-ball play in extra-ball areas you might feel safe at about 150,000 to start, then 300,000 and finally 500,000 points. For free-play try about 50,000 to 100,000 more points at each limit. Ideally, for even higher scoring the game could have worked with a bonus multiplier memory but still and all *Lectronamo* does very nicely, indeed.

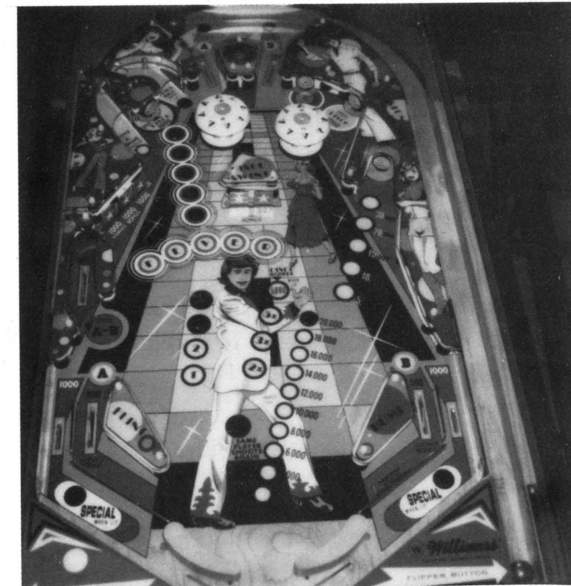
RATING: ###

Williams' DISCO FEVER

Now billing themselves as "the hot ones" this company has in fact been on a streak of late with such games as *World Cup* and *Contact* helping them turn the corner. *Disco Fever* with its bold graphics and "boogie" sound should more than help the cause as well.

PLAYFIELD: Two separated lanes (A&B) start the action with two thumper bumpers and two bulls-eye targets at the left following close behind. At the left is a roundabout with a bulls-eye target fronting in the middle. Move down and at the middle are two star drop targets which work in tandem with three drop targets at the left to spell out F-E-V-E-R. Go back to the right side and neatly recessed is yet another bulls-eye target. Finishing off the left side of the game is a short rollover lane. And then it's the bottom which is conventional except for the banana flippers you've undoubtedly been hearing about.

ANALYSIS: This is a quick game that has more than a contemporary theme and sound effects working in its favor. The action is solidly compact with the new flippers offering a subtle gimmick to the whole proceedings. The whole idea of the game, which has ample scoring almost everywhere, is to spell out D-I-S-C-O by hitting that bulls-eye target fronting the roundabout, a feature that is carried over from ball to ball, although its concurrent bonus multiplier isn't. So if you get the word spelled out and get the 2X bonus, you'll lose the latter on the next ball, but any of the portion of the word you've subsequently spelled will remain, making the get for extra bonus multiplication easier from one ball to the next.



Williams' DISCO FEVER

A&B, which can be gotten from the top lanes, the side lane at the left and the bottom flipper lanes, controls the build-up of bonused points at the right recessed bulls-eye target, with a top value of 30,000 that can be built up and scored again and again. Next on the agenda is the roundabout, which can mean a bonus multiplier up to 5X when it's lit or an extra ball when that's lit. And for the latter, that's where the F-E-V-E-R drop targets come into play depending upon the setting of the game in terms of how many times, up to four, you have to get the targets down.

Hopefully, you're still with me on this one because the big difference with *Disco Fever* is, of course, the flippers. The curve, also perceptually different really supplies the same type of action as conventional flippers, although reverses are far easier as is what Williams is calling "English." They're going to take some getting used to and may even turn off some players, but for a change of pace they really aren't too bad and work well within the design of the game. In fact, the game does play nice and offers more than

enough shots to get and keep most player's interest.

GRAPHICS: Why not capitalize on a phenomenon? Williams has with a mirrored backglass that is dazzling and should do well in neighborhood arcades that have a young disco-oriented audience. It's not Studio 54 or Zorines, but it is what middle America has come to think of the Travolta-zation of the teens of this country. It's colorful, bright and a game that many are going to be stopped by.

PLAY: *Disco Fever* is a good, solid three-ball effort which should be able to contain most scoring in the millions and not just the hundreds of thousands (even with the different flippers). With extra ball play, try limits of about 200,000 to start, followed by 400,000 and then 600,000 points. Raise these by about 100,000 points for free play depending upon the caliber of your players.

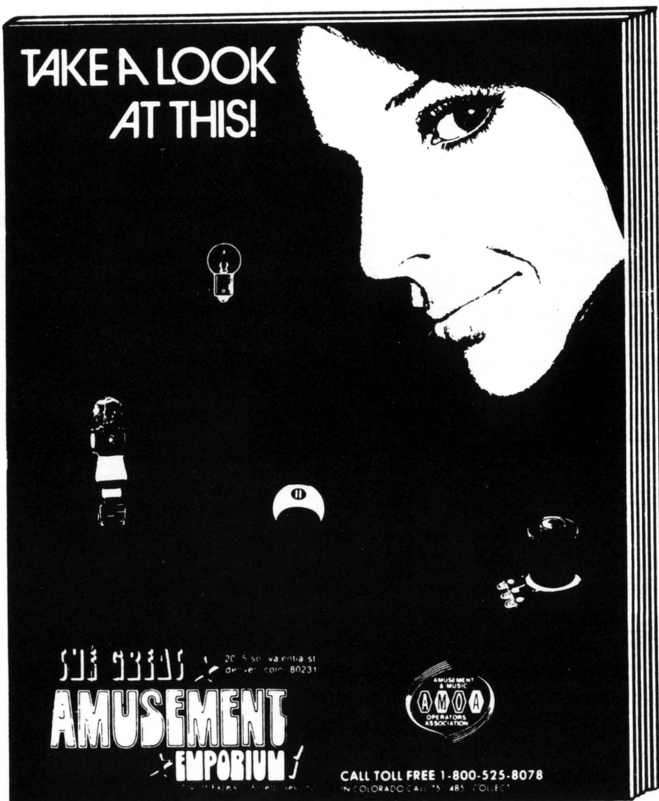
RATING: ###1/4

Well, fun-seekers that's it for mixing and matching the newest of

the new this time around. Remember that next month is A.M.O.A. preview time, and you might even find some reviews of games you haven't seen before let alone some you haven't even heard of. Also, I'll give you some tips on how to survive in Chicago as well as some places to visit when you're in the windy city. Last but not least a tribute to those valiant teams—the Cubs and White Sox—who supplied a summer of endless frustration and hope for better things. The refrain continues as it has since 1945 and 1959—wait until next year. In the meantime, as this is written, the seasons change and the Bears are now 3-1; if only dreams could come true. And, of course, there are always my favorites—the Bulls. Let's hope for an end to the playoff/championship jinx and some better tomorrows for the Hawks who recently signed Stan "The Main Man" Mikita to his twentieth year contract. Ah, Chicago sports, the thrill and agony of defeat.

Be of sound games one and all, take care until next time and lastly...as always...be well and prosper.

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Premier Soccer sponsors mini-tours

Premier Soccer of Imperial Billiards Industries has run a small foosball tour in the New York and New Jersey area.

The first \$1500 table soccer tournament was run in the Neptune Sea View Square Mall with the tournament co-sponsor, the Game Room, located in the mall. The second tournament was run at the Woodbridge Mall, Woodbridge, New Jersey, with The Game Room store again as a co-sponsor.

Both tournaments were successful with the second tournament drawing a much larger turnout than the first one due to the growing interest in table soccer in the area. Future tournaments are being planned for the fall with bigger and better events.

Future tournaments will have more events for both girls and guys as well as a Premier Soccer Trophy list of players.

Taking first place in the novice doubles in the first tournament were Eli Aburabia and Pete Marzo. Marzo came back to win the singles championships and to share the mixed doubles championship with Janet Marzo.

Pete Marzo did not stop there. In the Woodbridge Mall tournament, he claimed first place in the singles competition and teamed up again with Eli Aburabia to take home the doubles crown.

Joseph Burt and Bob Patterson teamed up to win the novice doubles event.

With the Neptune and Woodbridge tournaments behind it, Premier Soccer is now looking ahead to its fall tour which will involve a fairly heavy schedule of a variety of events for the tournament crew. Included in the northwestern United States tour are two \$5,000 tourna-

ments, a \$4,000 tournament, and a \$3,000 tournament.

Later this month, (October 27-28) and next month (November 10-11), Premier moves to Benson's \$2,000 mini-tour which involves two tournaments, the first to be held at Benson Swim World in Sun Prairie, Wisconsin, and the second to be at the Benson Swim World in Rockford, Illinois.

Dorothy Gottlieb passes away

Dorothy Gottlieb, widow of David Gottlieb who was founder and chairman of the board of D. Gottlieb and Company, died September 9.

Well known within the industry, she was admired and respected by coin distributors and operators both in the United States and in the international market.

She was the mother of Alvin Gottlieb, executive vice president of Gottlieb, Marjorie G. Weinberg, Roberta Kaye, and the mother-in-law of Judd A. Weinberg, president of Gottlieb.

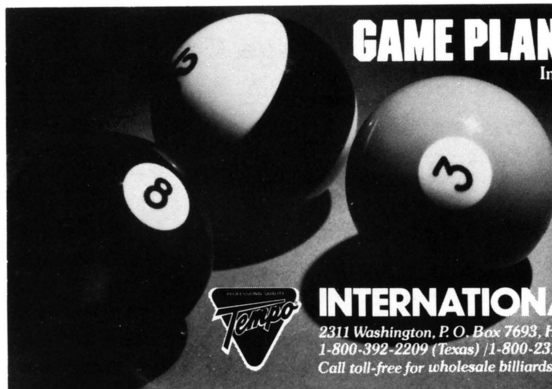
Mrs. Gottlieb and her husband, David, were the co-founders of Gottlieb Memorial Hospital in Melrose Park, Illinois, a project which occupied a great part of their lives in their later years. They were both life members of the hospital's board of governors.

Funeral services were held September 11 in West Suburban Temple Har Zion in River Forest and were attended by relatives and many friends within the industry.

Daddis named sales manager

Vectorbeam has announced the appointment of Dick Daddis as its sales manager. Daddis brings with him over thirty years of experience to Vectorbeam, the manufacturers of the new *Space War* video game.

He has worked in all phases of the coin machine industry including trucking, service, sales, distribution and manufacturing.



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'Close Encounters' released in EM version

A follow-up electro-mechanical version of Gottlieb's four-player solid state game *Close Encounters* has been released for shipment to distributors according to Tom Herrick, Gottlieb's marketing vice president.

The play of the game and playfield are practically identical to the solid state version. Although the backglass

graphics are slightly different, the "spaceship" flavor has been retained as have the game's unique electronic sounds.

With the distinctive Gottlieb Roto-Target as the focal point of the playfield, a three-times multiplier and two high scores for replays *Close Encounters* in its new format will offer an alternative to those operators and players who still like the sounds

and feel of electro-mechanical games.

"Gottlieb will continue to produce appropriate electro-mechanical versions of major games as long as there is a demand for them," commented Alvin Gottlieb, the company's executive vice president, restating a Gottlieb policy that has been in effect since the advent of solid state.

Vectorbeam starts up

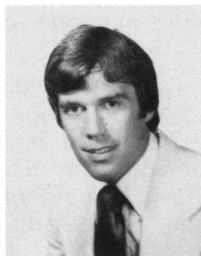
Vectorbeam, the manufacturers of the new *Space War* video game, has moved to its spacious new facility located at 33441 Central Avenue, Union City, California 94587, phone number is (415) 489-2000.

Vectorbeam planned to start shipping the new *Space War* game by the middle of this month. This new *Space War* game will have a small cabinet plus some improvements in electronics to make the game more reliable.

Larry Rosenthal, president of Vectorbeam and designer of the smash hit video game *Space Wars*, says that two new games are in the works and are expected to be presented this November at the A.M.O.A. show in Chicago.

Alexander appointed

Ted Alexander has been appointed regional manager for sales by Greenwald Industries, Brooklyn, New York, designers and manufacturers of coin meter systems.



Ted Alexander

A graduate of Long Island University, Alexander was formerly a sales representative with CEBCO, Inc.

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Rouso purchases sales and service firm

Stan Rouso, formerly vice president and general manager of Portale Automatic Sales, Los Angeles, has purchased the independent sales and service Bill and Phil's Coin Operated Equipment.

Bill Hahn and Phil Giannone, formerly mechanics at Portale Automatic Sales on Pico Boulevard, began their successful operation on Los Angeles' "amusement machine row" in January, 1973. Hahn proudly showed PLAY METER the bank balance book how they began the business with \$1,339.25 in 1973 and built it into six figures, ending up owning the building that comprises nearly one-half block.

"We've owed no one anything," Hahn said, "and paid by delivery slip. We drew low salaries, reinvested everything back into the business, and paid for this building in three years. That's not bad for a couple of mechanics."

The secret to their success?

"We catered to the two-bit operator who bought one, two machines at a time, and stayed away from video games," replies Hahn, 57, who has enjoyed watching the industry from early slot machine days ride through modern video and solid state pinball technology. He plans to retire to a northern California farm, partner Phil plans to keep right on working for Rouso as shop foreman and will assist in sales. Giannone is also a specialist on jukeboxes.

Rouso has been with Portale for more than four years and has an extensive background in the coin-operated industry, ranging from full-line vending with such companies as Stoner Manufacturing in Aurora, Illinois, Seeburg, and National Vendors. His new company will carry the banner, Stan Rouso, Inc. and will specialize in "service, sales, and financing." The purchase includes the building, fixtures, inventory and parts supply.

Namco America opens

?

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- Who told you about the Internal Revenue Service's case against pinball tournaments—and how to get that law overturned?
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Masaya Nakamura



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Satish Bhutani

Masaya Nakamura, president of Namco, Ltd. Japan and chairman of the board of Namco-America, Inc., has formally announced the opening of Namco-America, Inc.

Namco-America, Inc., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Namco, Ltd. Japan, is located at 343 Gibraltar Drive in Sunnyvale, California 94086. The premises are approximately 10,000 square feet and are equipped with offices and warehouse facilities.

Hideyuki Nakajima, president of Namco-America, said the company started importing Namco games September 1 and that Satish Bhutani, who is the company's vice president of marketing, will be charged with setting up distributor

channels all over the United States, Canada, and South and Central America. Presently he is calling on major distributors across the United States to market Namco's first import, *Shoot Away*, a new arcade piece.

Bhutani, who is also responsible for managing Namco-America's operations in the United States, said that all Namco's games marketed in the United States will have a sufficient supply of spare parts for backup.

To facilitate customer service, Namco-America has installed a toll-free telephone number, 1-800-538-1610. Namco-America can also be reached by telephone at (408) 745-7600.

North Carolina's Big Hullabaloo

By David Pierson

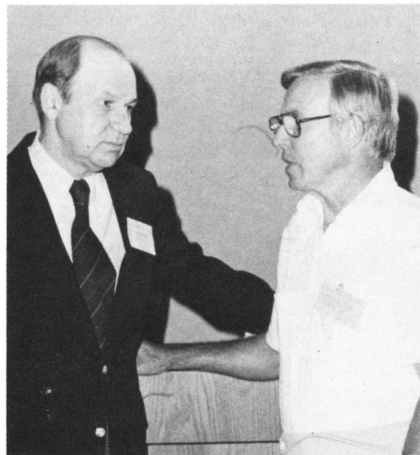
Although lately some state shows have been experiencing rough times (in the forms of declining exhibitor interest or even declining operator interest), that certainly was not the case with the annual convention of the North Carolina Coin Operators Association (N.C.C.O.A.). At its fifth annual trade show September 16-17 at the Sheraton Center in Charlotte, the N.C.C.O.A. recorded its largest turnout ever.

Registered attendance at the show reached 249 (almost 200 of that number were operators and their families); and there were about twenty exhibitor booths on the floor. In fact, the exhibit hall was so crammed that it was necessary to put one of the booths outside the hall at the entrance to the exhibit area.

On hand for the show were A.M.O.A. officers Don Van Brackel, Fred Granger, and Garland Garrett. It was for them, as for everyone else, the first opportunity to talk with large gatherings of other operators about the recent unfavorable ruling by the Copyright Royalty Tribunal (see related story). The ruling requires operators to supply the Tribunal with a complete list of all their jukebox locations, something which operators insist is confidential business information.

The operators with whom PLAY METER talked were embittered by the ruling. Some said they felt betrayed by the government, and some even talked of fighting the order in court. Said another operator, "It hurts, but I'm not the least bit surprised by it [the Tribunal's decision]."

Van Brackel, A.M.O.A.'s president, complained about the excessive regulations already required by federal agencies. "I'm disappointed like everyone else," he said. "I don't see why the Copyright Office and the Copyright Royalty Tribunal continue



Fred Granger of the A.M.O.A. listens as N.C.C.O.A. President James B. Reaves airs his feelings about the jukebox copyright law.

to march forward with further regulations when we're having enough problems with the ones we've got now."

Support for the operators' position came from another source. U.S. Senator Robert Morgan of North Carolina had sent a letter to the Copyright Royalty Tribunal prior to its ruling asking the Tribunal to "carefully review the issues." His letter, which was widely circulated on the convention floor, pointed out that operators look upon their location lists as confidential information and that the added paperwork "appears to be a bit excessive to my mind." Morgan also suggested that the Tribunal was getting into areas where it was not allowed to go. Wrote Morgan: "There are some questions as to whether the regulations go beyond the powers granted the Tribunal."

The largest exhibitor at the show was Brady Distributing Company which displayed equipment from Rock-Ola, Bally, Gottlieb, Stern,

Midway, Game Plan, Coinco, Atari, and Cinematronics.

Among the games in the Brady booth which drew more than their share of attention was Bally's new six-player pinball game named, quite appropriately, *The Six Million Dollar Man*. Besides the possible play incentive the game might provide in pinball promotions, such as tournaments, the game stands on its own. Its playfield is jampacked with features and resembles somewhat, especially at the top of the playfield, *Power Play*.

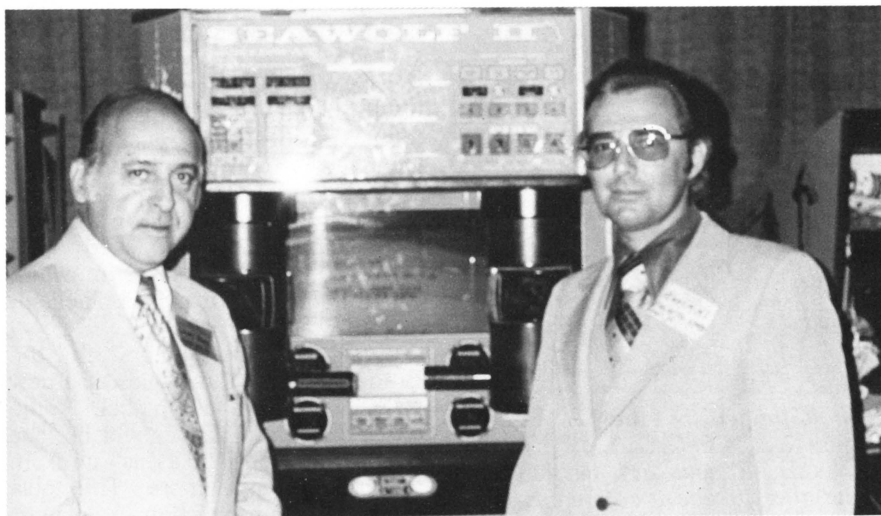
Other attention-getters in the Brady booth included Midway's new solid state cocktail pinball game called *Rotation Eight* which, like Bally's *Eight Ball*, takes its cue from the billiard game motif. The table rotates in any direction to players seated at one of four playing positions—North, South, East, and West. It features dual-action flippers and comes in two models, a 31-inch "cocktail table model" and a 38-inch "arcade model." Features include a total memory recall system, solid or striped competition, two bank shot lanes, an out-hole bonus, and an extra ball feature.

Midway was also spotlighting its new video game *Shuffleboard* in the Brady booth. *Shuffleboard* is actually two games in one, cruise shuffle and table shuffle; and players can compete against a computer, which plays a very challenging game, or against another player. *Shuffleboard* also provides authentic sounds as pucks slide along the floor and strike other pucks. Player control is in a ball set in the console. With it, players can change the position, speed, and direction of the puck.

Atari's *Super Breakout* was also on display, featuring three versions of the popular video game—including *Double Breakout* where two balls are served to two paddles, *Progres-*



Among the exhibitors at the N. C. C. O. A. show were, from left, Jon Brady, Brady Distributing; Joe Peters, Wildcat Chemical; Felicia Tornabene, Bally Manufacturing; and Wayne Melton, also of Brady.



Midway's Larry Berke (left) and Kenneth Mims of Palmetto State Distributing were both on hand for the North Carolina show, as was Midway's hit video game, Seawolf II.



A. M. O. A. President Don Van Brackel is flanked by two North Carolina operators, Henry Keels and Steve Napier.

sive *Breakout* where new rows of bricks enter from the top of the screen, and *Cavity Breakout* where two extra balls are trapped within walls of bricks and don't start breaking bricks until they are freed.

Another large exhibitor at the show was Palmetto State Distributing which was showing U.S. Billiards, Midway, Bally, Allied Leisure, United, Williams, and Seeburg equipment. Among the new offerings in the Palmetto booth were United's *Aristocrat*, a solid state bowling game, and Allied's *Take Five* cocktail pinball game, which features add-a-ball and free-play options.

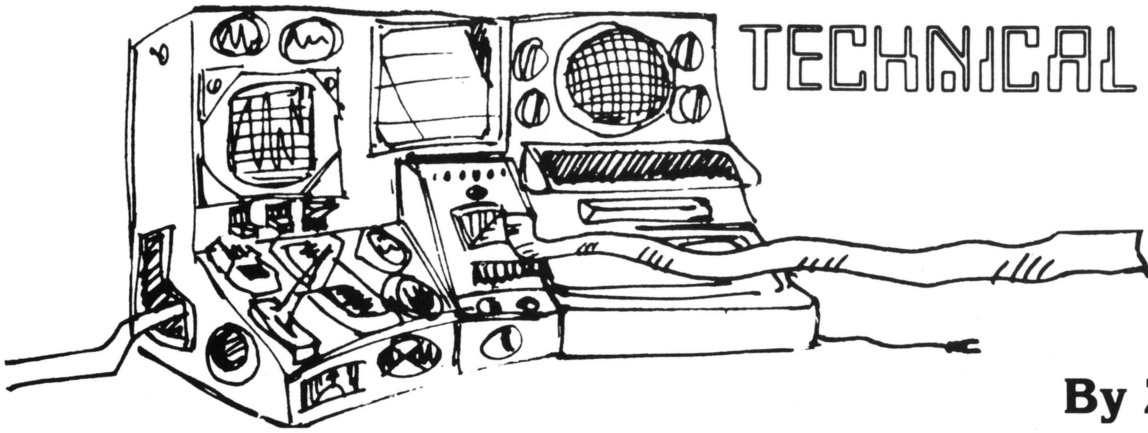
Wildcat Chemical was also there, exhibiting its fourteen cleaners for video games, pinball, and pool tables. Two new products which it introduced at the show were *R-88*, a cleaner, softener, and rejuvenator for the rubbers on the pinball machines; and *Touchdown*, a video screen cleaner designed to combat scratches on the plexiglass screens.

The Rowe of Columbia booth was showing—in addition to Midway's *Rotation Eight*—Irving Kaye's *Silver Shadow* pool table, Rowe's current line of phonographs, pingames from Bally and Stern (*Strikes and Spares* and *Lectronamo*) and two video games from Midway (*Space Walk* and *Seawolf II*).

Among the other N.C.C.O.A. exhibitors was Ramtek. The Sunnyvale, California company featured its new laser action video game *Dark Invader* (a name suggestive of Darth Vader, the arch-villain in the movie "Star Wars"). *Dark Invader*, apparently designed to appeal to younger players, is an easy-to-play game where players try to shoot down (if there's such a thing as "down" in outer space) flying saucers. Other exhibitors included U.B.I., Inc. which displayed its new Rosewood pool table; Valley, which was showing its Big Cat pool table; Peabody's Inc., with the Rene Pierre foosball table; O.B.A., showing its *Challenger* foosball model.

Featured activities at the convention and trade show included a pool tournament which drew a large turnout, and a seminar on troubleshooting, which did not.

The meeting concluded with a banquet and the election of officers for the coming year. Those newly-elected officers are as follows: Ed Reynolds of Red Springs, president; Jimmy Thorpe of Rocky Mount, first vice president; Jimmy Watkins of Albemarle, second vice president; Jim Smith of Fayetteville, treasurer; and Milton Hobbs of Connelly Springs, secretary and convention chairman.



By Zac Oliver

Some similarities exist

The electronic flipper games have flooded the market sooner than some of us thought they would. The electro-mechanical games with the exception of some "winners," is rapidly fading away.

Servicewise, the E.P. (Electronic Pinball) dramatically reduced problems with the control circuitry. However, the E.P. shares the playfield similarity with its electro-mechanical sister; some of the parts are the same, some have been newly designed, some redesigned. Bumpers, kickers, and flippers have never before been subjected to so much wear and tear. Power and play are just not matching the life of some of the parts.

More than ever, preventive maintenance is a must. As part of a preventive maintenance schedule, playfield shop-out must be done in regular intervals, according to game play. Even if the machine seems to be playing all right, we know that on the inside, plungers are constantly striking coil stops, screws are getting loose, etc. Sometimes a technician will drive a long way to make a service call only to find out that the right flipper is not working because one of the coil stop screws is loose, and the jarring movement of the coil broke an End of Stroke switch wire. With a solder gun, a pair of pliers and some solder, the machine can be fixed in five minutes. This is the kind of problem that can be easily prevented.

When you have the playfield open, go ahead and look for loose screws, nuts, connections, and anything else that might be wrong with the game. It won't take more than a few minutes, and it could save several hours. It will also give you an idea of how long it will be before this

particular game will need an overhaul. Take a notebook along and write down the parts that need replacing or cleaning and whatever special tools that you just might need to do this job.

Get used to writing things down instead of trying to remember everything. Make this notebook a part of your tool kit—you can then organize your service calls from these notes. Get all the parts you need. Remember that these parts will also go out somewhere else on other games, so always carry extra parts. You can use the list in this article to help you add or subtract items according to your own needs. Some items will cross-match on all

manufacturers; others can only be replaced by the original manufacturer. Make sure you have all the tools required for the work and give yourself plenty of time, particularly if it's the first time you are going to perform this type of work on location.

As an example, let's work on a fictitious playfield by Bally. Since the basic idea behind preventive maintenance is to check the entire machine (in this case, only the playfield), start wherever you feel most comfortable.

Flippers

If you choose the flippers, remove the coil stop and flipper arm. The

Manufacturer	Part. No.	Description
Bally	C-790	Bumper Skirt ¹
"	C-114-3	Bumper Body
"	A-1873	Ring & Rod Assembly
Williams	20A-9176	Nut (Post Fastening Screw)
"	1A-5492	Metal Plate
"	1A-5493	Fiber Plate
Bally	A-3714-3	Plunger & Link Assembly
"	C-1062	Plastic Cap For Kicker Arm
"	M-108-9	T Nuts
"	M-1787-4	Plastic Sticker
"	S-1969	Bushing
"	P-1973-337	Link Bank Drop TGT
"	S-458-26	Shoulder Stud
"	A-3459-2	Kicker Arm
"	A-613-67	Coil Stop
"	R-206-9	Mini Post Rubber (Black)
Williams	23A-6535	Mini Post Rubber (White)
Gottlieb	B-8246	Pop Bumper Trim Plate ²
"	C-649-53	Bushing
"	SFPP 832-1106	Screws
"	AS-2250-34	Spinner & Gate Assembly
"	P-1158-6	Spring Washer

1 Made of a more resistant plastic.
2 A good option is Wico's Cover-it-Ring.

FIG. 1

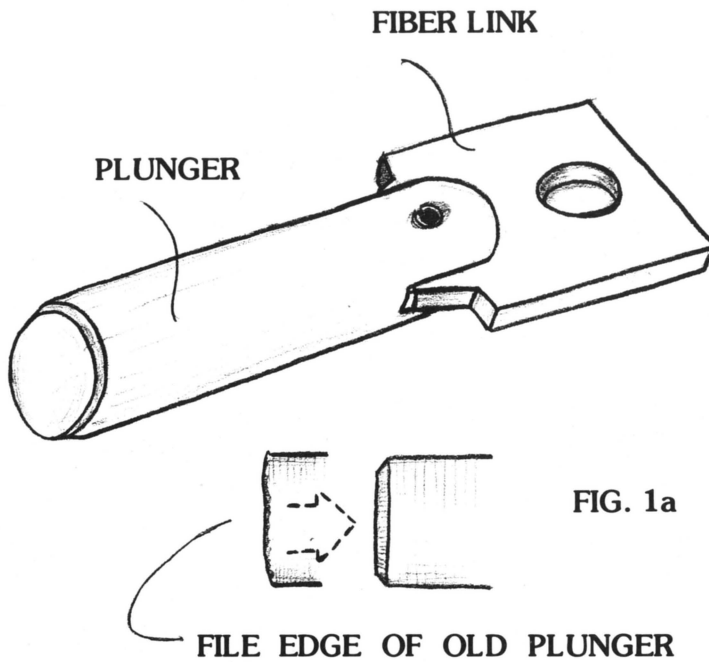
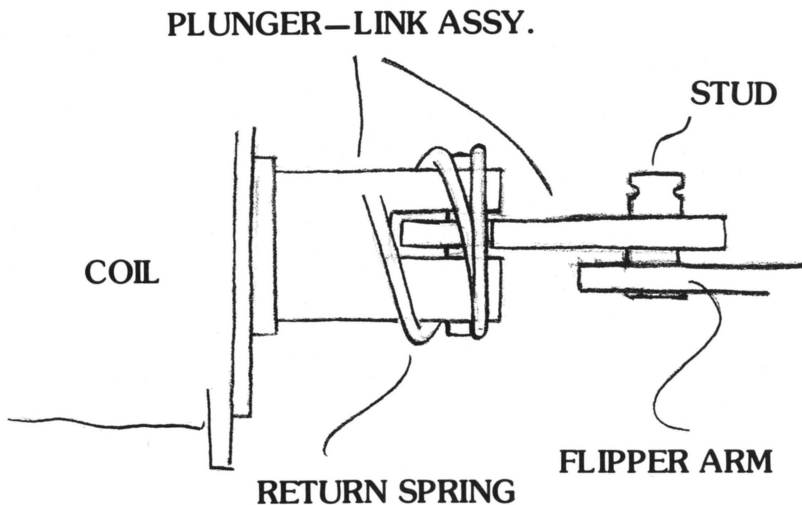


FIG. 2



return spring should be replaced if part of it is missing; otherwise, re-stretch it. Are the plastic flippers cracked? Level them with the playfield to prevent them from scratching the playboard. This sometimes is caused by the bending of the shoe and shaft when the rubbers are replaced. Replace the plunger-link assembly. Flipper performance is greatly affected by

worn-out links (use the redesigned link, Figure 1). The old plunger might be reusable, replacing the link and grinding the edge of the plunger so that it strikes the coil stop just as it did originally (Figure 1a). The assembly expedites service and won't cost much more than a plunger.

If the sleeve checks OK, reassemble the coil, but don't forget the spring washer. Insert the plunger-link.

assembly with the return spring to the flipper arm and to the coil. You can subtract the plastic and "E" washers that hold the link to the flipper arm because the plunger travel inside the coil sleeve will prevent it from scaping the stud in the flipper arm (Figure 2). It will also facilitate future replacements. Tighten the allen screws in the flipper arm securely to the shaft, keeping the flippers in their original position. Leave one millimeter gap between bushing and arm to prevent sticking (Figure 3). Retighten all screws as needed and then file the end of stroke switches and flipper button switches. Adjust. Check manually for operation.

Kickers or sling shots

On some games, the post closest to the flippers can get as loose as it might on other areas of the playfield, hit by straight shots. This can ruin the wood if left unattended. Drill a hole straight through the playboard or use the post screw to open the hole and use the post fastening screw (machine threaded) with a "T" nut. Look for broken or cracked plastic caps on the kicker's arm. These are a pain to replace, but better now than on a Friday night service call because of a broken rubber! Check the link and realign the switch blades. On most games doubling the rubbers will increase reliability of the game. Apply the playfield plastic protector stickers on every game that lacks a set. Always carry a variety of hardware (screws, washers, etc.) to use on pingames on emergencies.

Drop targets

Bushings, links, studs, reset bar (4 and 5 positions), (Figure 4) plastic targets, sleeves, coil stops, plunger and fiber links should be replaced as needed. On one reset coil target banks, the side without the coil can be readjusted on its travel to compensate for worn out parts. Loosen the allen screws in the bushing and turn it, moving the bar

FIG. 3

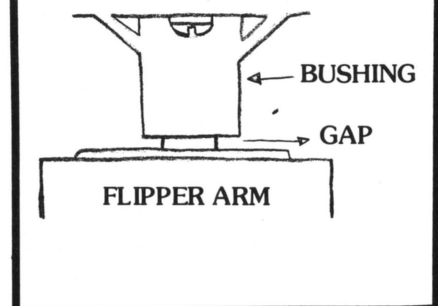
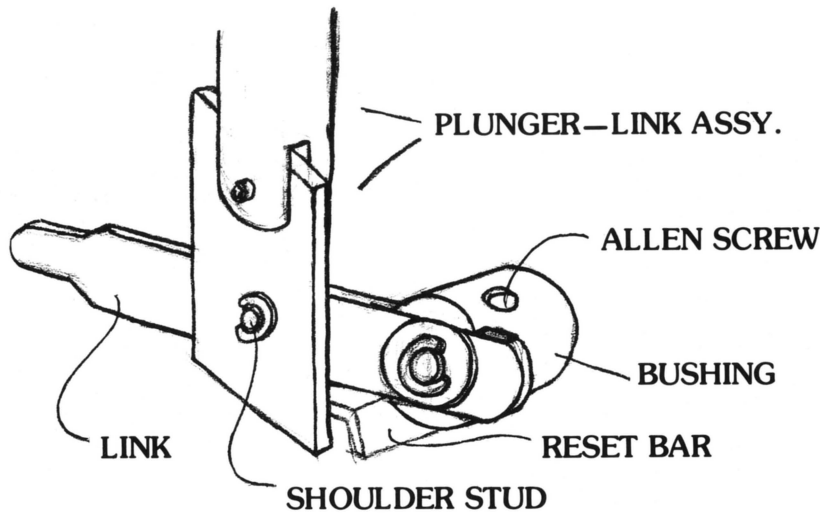


FIG. 4



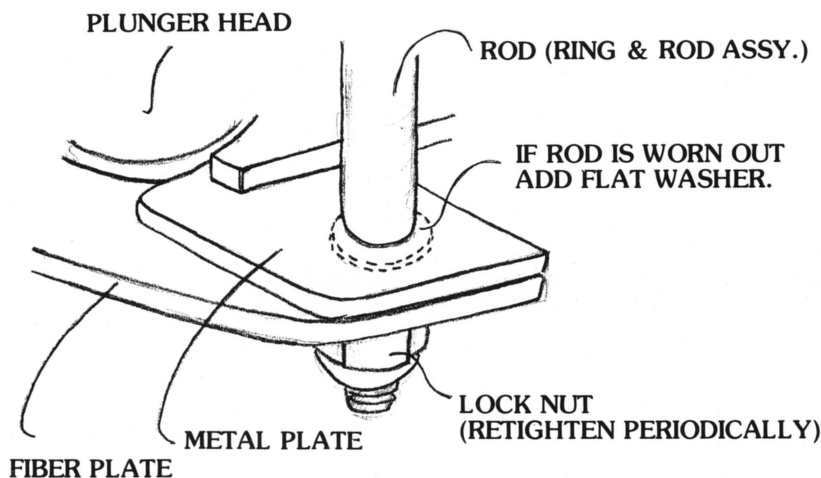
in order to prevent excessive rod wear (Figure 5). Restretch the spring, check the plunger and stop.

Remember that the plunger should be clean and completely free of oils, a frequent cause of "sticking." Reassemble the unit. Make sure that the round part of the coil spool is down. Hold the unit firmly, pressing the coil-link assembly and tighten the two phillips screws; then reassemble the unit with the playfield, and align and lubricate the skirt stem to the switch cup (Figure 6). Mount the coil bracket to the playfield, and align and lubricate the skirt stem to the switch cup (Figure 6). Mount the coil bracket to the playfield. Check the switch adjustment, solder the connections, and check the overall operation.

Saucer ejectors (See Figure)

Little maintenance is required for these units. Check the switch adjustment and the direction the ball is kicked out. Bend with a pair of long nose pliers accordingly, to make sure that the ball is shot in the proper direction. The tension on the spring mechanism will damage the playfield sooner. Retighten the screws, especially the ones that hold the unit to the playboard.

FIG. 5



Playing area

Adjust the ball shooter alignment. Replace the rubber tip if necessary. Rubber chipping, sluggish action, and jumping balls are common causes of shooter misalignment; rubbers in general are severely hit by the balls in the new games. Because of this, playfield clean-up is needed much earlier than before.

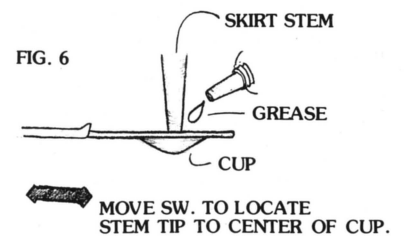
Use a wide soft bristle brush to wipe the excess dirt and big rubber particles off the playfield through the outhole. Remove all plastic for cleaning and to give you access to the rubbers and bulbs. A rubber shaped by its standing position has lost most of its flexibility and should be replaced. Others can be cleaned with a commercial rubber cleaner. Rotate the clean ones to prevent wear. Use a round, soft bristle brush

up. Retighten the screws, lubricate the joints, and check the switches and overall operation.

thumper bumpers

Along with the flippers, the units used most often are the thumper bumpers or jet bumpers or pop bumpers. These units have the highest number of parts that cross-match with different manufac-

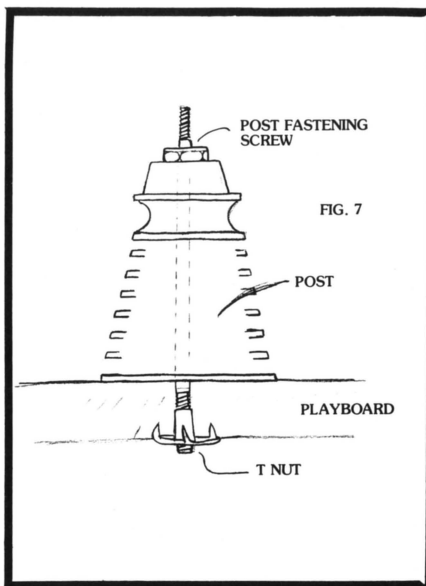
urers. Assemble the unit completely from under the playfield. Leave the coil hanging through its wires. If the skirt is damaged or chipped, take the time to disassemble the whole unit from the top. Check the bumper body, trim plate and rods, replacing whatever is damaged or worn. Replace the metal plates if they are worn out, or reverse them. The lock nuts will require periodic retightening



to spread and rub the playfield cleaner. Always buff the cleaner off before it dries. Replace bulbs. On hard-to-reach places, use the #755 bulbs that have an average lifetime greater than the #1847s. The 44s are brighter (and consume more current), but have a very short life, as do the 47s. Some bulbs might show bad contact sockets; use solder to improve the connections.

Posts that are constantly hit by straight shots should use post-fastening screws that will cross the playfield, with a T nut (Figure 7), where possible. If the spinners constantly need adjustment, replace them with a standard type, like the one in the parts list. If the holes in the spinner arch are too large, replace the arch altogether. Replace the rubber on the mini post in front of the spinner wire. Use a quick drying glue to hold the wire guides, usually forming the lanes around the sling shots.

Clean the star rollovers and check for operation. Replace broken rollover guides, and carry a good assortment of double and single aprons in all lengths and colors. Check the rollover wire operation, rolling a ball slowly over these wires while watching for dead spots. The contacts on switch blades of some stand up targets might be worn out



(the gold plate is dug by the small contact, forming a groove). Disassemble the switch and reverse the blades. This malfunction is more noticeable during game play; the ball hits the target and no points are scored. By the way, you should also carry a good number of .05 disc capacity for routine maintenance. Replace the post-fastening screw caps with worn out threads. Check the playfield operation with the power on, and give the machine the

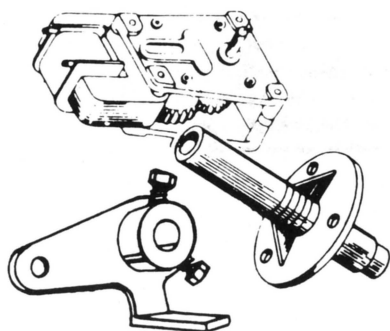
final touches.

A checklist is invaluable in this kind of work because of the large number of parts to check, clean, or replace, but with experience this becomes routine. The time and trouble it takes to do this saves even more time and trouble in the long run.

The idea behind all this work is to make service easier. If you can keep a machine "factory fresh," there will be fewer calls on that game, especially when and if design problems are corrected. There are two other major areas on a pingame that require attention: the back and the front door. We'll cover these areas in another issue. The work described here will take an average of one to two hours per machine, depending on the technician's experience, his tools, the availability of parts, location conditions, etc.

It will also give you the possibility of analyzing the cost of parts and labor per machine, and to schedule preventive maintenance and parts. This is a must for the route man interested in his work, his customers, location owners and players, his company and himself. A clean, well-working machine will be played more often and will increase the revenues for everyone concerned.

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Check Account Secrecy



By Howard J. Ruff

The Supreme Court has ruled that the records of your account with the bank are the property of the bank and can be subpoenaed by the Internal Revenue Service in a criminal action suit against you, or even in a simple tax dispute, for that matter. The Constitution protects us, supposedly, against being forced to incriminate ourselves and I find these principles in conflict if a third party can be forced to disclose your private records.

There is an interesting conflict of rights.

1-The bank is required by Federal Reserve and Treasury regulations to microfilm all checks as a permanent record to be used for whatever fishing expedition government might deem of interest at any given time.

2-The law does not require you to make your check legible for microfilming.

3-The regulators have been trying to get around this by telling the banks not to accept your check unless you help them by having a check which can be microfilmed.

4-The courts have held on many occasions that checks can be written on anything, just so that they can be read well enough to be negotiated, so they shouldn't be able to get away with it.

Here is the big question. Do you have to cooperate with the bank

requirement to be microfilmed?

Legally, no. But as a practical matter you may have to yield to get the bank to do business with you.

I've been recommending that people conduct their banking business on dark red checks as a simple matter of personal privacy, as it is impossible to microfilm them by banks for their permanent records. I had no idea how much that would bother Big Brother.

The following letter went out from the Department of the Treasury to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve and was passed on to all banks in the Fourth Federal Reserve District by the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland:

"Dear Mr. Ryan:

A number of federal agencies, as well as the American Bankers Association have directed our attention to a new practice in the printing of checks. As reported by TIME magazine in its September 26, 1977 issue, a firm in Charlotte, North Carolina, is selling check forms printed on red paper.

Apparently, when checks written on red paper are routinely microfilmed, the microfilm of them is illegible. Since 31 CFR 103 contains a general requirement that each drawee bank must maintain the original or copy of checks written for more than \$100, it may be advisable to alert banks to

their responsibility in this area. If a bank permits its depositors to use checks which cannot be effectively microfilmed and fails to make other provision to meet the requirements of the regulations, it may well be in violation of the law.

Please keep us informed concerning any action you decide to take with respect to this matter; we would appreciate receiving copies of any general communications that you may issue on the subject.

/s/Arthur Sinai—
Deputy Assistant
Secretary (Enforcement)"

So, how do you beat the game if you still want to maintain your privacy? There are several techniques, some requiring a little ingenuity and inconvenience.

I'm not sure why I am doing all this, except that I have a visceral concern for my Constitutional freedoms, and even though I have nothing to hide, I never know which of the hundreds of thousands of regulations I might inadvertently violate some day, giving them the excuse for a fishing expedition into my private affairs. You don't have to have anything illegal or immoral in your background to want to maintain your privacy. Would you like your neighbors to be able to snoop through your cancelled checks any time they want? I think that principle

is justification enough. Here are some suggestions:

(1) For those transactions you wish to keep private, withdraw cash and purchase money orders. That has the disadvantage of complicating your accounting and your tax record keeping, but with a little extra work it can be done.

(2) You can order checks printed in light green and write with a light green or light blue pen. This can be seen well enough to be negotiated, but it is almost impossible to microfilm. You can buy such pens from Liberty Graphics, P.O. Box 3614, Charlotte, North Carolina 28203 (Copy-Not reproducing pens made by Eberhard Faber, \$8.28 per dozen, plus fifty cents for shipping. These are also available at most local commercial stationery and office supply stores).

An assistant cashier for a national bank has come up with the darndest simple solution to banking privacy.

Tax deductible check expenditures, which you will have to produce anyway if you should face an IRS audit, should be written in the normal way with ordinary checks and ordinary pens. For those checks which are used to purchase items which you would just as soon not have anyone know about, make out the check for the correct amount, payable to "cash" and then endorse it to the payee of the back. This is the so-called restrictive endorsement. When checks are microfilmed, only the face of the check is photographed (See Secretary Sinai's letter with reference to \$100 requirement. However, some banks for sake of convenience microfilm all checks, and do both sides. Check with your bank).

While this may be a solution, or with some banks it may not, there is the potential problem pointed out by Dr. Gary North in his book, "How to Profit from the Coming Price Controls." He quotes a long-buried Emergency Banking Order, to be implemented "in case of an 'attack' on the United States," which would require all checks over \$1,000 to be photocopied, front and back. And, it also freezes your bank funds.

I don't know what would be construed as an "attack." An oil boycott? A threat? Who knows. The obvious solution is to haul your money out of the bank at the first sign of trouble, and ask for an immediate cut-off statement. The only risk of front-and-back copying would be those checks which have not cleared, and it would take several days before the banks could implement the copy order.

The checks you might be

concerned about are those where government power is encroaching on constitutional rights. If we had federal gun control laws, for instance, and the government were chasing down gun purchases, the first place they would want to look would be microfilmed bank records, and you might not want to make that easy for them. That's a matter of personal conscience. You might not want them to see your checks payable to a food storage company or coin dealer, as the time could come when government would want to call in your gold or seize excess food supplies (not likely, but possible) and you will have to decide whether or not civil disobedience is for you. And, I'm neutral in those matters. I honestly don't know what I would do, but I want to keep my options open. I want to hang onto the rights granted me in the Constitution.

As a matter of fact, the entire Bill of Rights is a series of links in the chain with which we decided to bind government. Our founding fathers worried about any possible repetition of the repressive government of King George. The right to protection from self-incrimination was written, not to protect criminals, but to protect law-abiding citizens against the abuse of government. One of the great dangerous trends of our time is the abuse of governmental power by regulatory agencies with the collusion of the courts, and I simply want to prepare my life so that if the time comes that if I have to stand against that power in order to protect myself and the Constitution, I am able to do so. *And, my bank records are my own business.*

The founder of my church once said that at some future time, "...the

Constitution of the United States will hang by a thread," and many other far-sighted men of other religious persuasions have made similar statements. The time may come when the only defense of that Constitution will be to stand behind its provisions against those who would abuse it or evade it through the misuse of government regulatory power.

Whether an individual's actions in resisting government constitutes a moral defense of the Constitution, or simply a violation of the law, is a judgment call. The tax revolt is an example of that principle. I consider the direct confrontation methods of tax revolt to be needlessly dangerous and unnecessary at this time. The "Confrontation" tax rebels are trying to bring down the taxing system and are, in effect, throwing themselves in front of the government steamroller to do so. I think that's unwise and premature. The steamroller is going to run out of gas and self-destruct anyway. But I want to be able to use every defensive position against the aggressive encroachment of government in my life, if I should need to, and the right to privacy and the right to avoid self-incrimination are some of those rights which should be protected.

Let's try to keep one jump ahead of those rascals in Washington as long as we can. So—crank up the green ink!

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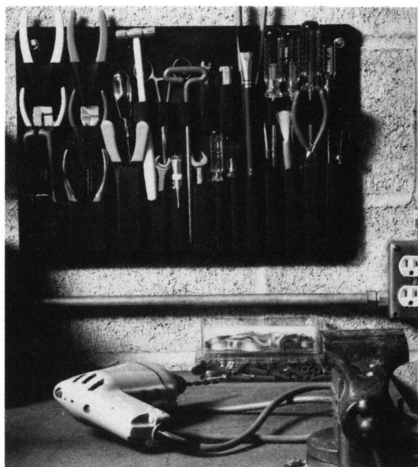
Where's the screwdriver!

Platt Luggage of Chicago, Illinois has introduced a tool organizer to the market.

The Platt pallet is molded of exceptionally tough urethane and is ideal for holding a large selection of small tools. It can be put up next to the work bench and is excellent for keeping the tools out of grit and grime as is usually with the case with tool boxes.

The pallet is one strong piece of urethane, and no stitches, seams, flaps, or rivets form any of the pockets.

The pallet also comes with an unconditional five-year guarantee.



Beauty and the Beast

"Dragon with its "Beauty-and-the-Beast" graphics is actually startling the first time you approach it," said Alvin Gottlieb recently in describing D. Gottlieb's newest solid state four-player pinball game.

The company is currently into full production of *Dragon* whose eye-catching backglass graphics featuring a macho maiden atop a fire breathing dragon are the talk of the industry. The game marks Gottlieb's first use in four-player, solid state of its exclusive vari-targets. It is also characterized by an "advancing multiple" 5X bonus which scores up to 95,000 points plus the unique electronic sounds of Gottlieb games.

"Hitting rollovers and targets in the correct rotation produces the highest multipliers. For example, energizing A and B first in the top series of A-B-C-D rollovers will result in a significantly higher multiplier. Also, penetrating the vari-targets at the proper strategic times makes a marked difference in scoring totals.

Three-in-one table

Ebonite Billiards and Games has introduced the Trieste three-in-one *Gambit* table.

The top side of this versatile table is perfect for dining or general use. Reverse the top and it becomes a card-game table with recessed compartments for eight players. Remove the top and the Trieste is a 52-inch wide bumper pool game. This 31-inch high table is equipped with balls, cues, and instruction sheets.

Ebonite also offers handsomely styled Trieste folding chairs.



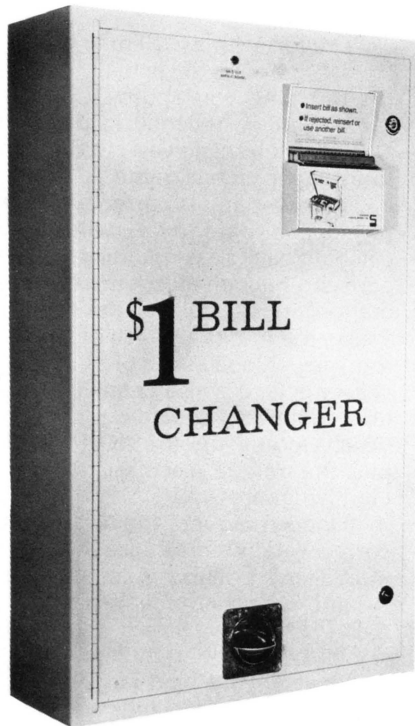


Great Neptune!

"They are a bargain and still an excellent investment," Alvin Gottlieb, executive vice president of D. Gottlieb & Company, said of his company's latest single-player electro-mechanical flipper game called *Hit the Deck*.

The game has a card playing theme. The diamond and spade sequences are made by hitting fourteen rollovers and targets to light two kickout holes for special scores. It also has simulated digital scoring for added attractiveness.

Gottlieb's marketing vice president Tom Herrick, said about the company's newest offering, "These games can still be operated efficiently anywhere in the world, backed up by company policy to supply spare parts and service for five years from production."



Bill Changer

Standard Change-Makers, Inc. of Indianapolis has introduced two new series of two-hopper, bulk-loading bill and coin changers, the 7203 \$1 Bill Changer and the 7303 Bill/Coin Changer.

Because the changers are hopper-loaded, they are easier to fill. You just pour the coins straight down from the bag into the hoppers. They are channeled from the hopper to the dispensing mechanism through a process of gentle magnetic vibration. The process eliminates problems caused by bent or mutilated coins.

The 7203 will change up to \$1,156 bills with six optional return change combinations. The 7303 changes dollar bills and quarters with two optional return change combinations.

Both changers are housed in maximum security cabinets, built of heavy gauge steel with two case-hardened UL-approved locks. The changers will mount easily to a wall or post. They are also available in rear-loading cabinets which can be built into a wall and filled in the safety of a back room or utility area. There is also an optional bill stacker available that automatically faces bills as it stacks them.

Freedom of Choice

Reading PLAY METER also gives you the freedom to compare product information from the coin-operated amusements manufacturers and service companies. If you would like to learn more about our advertisers and their products or services, feel free to find them in this alphabetical listing, then circle corresponding number on our Reader Service Card, between pages 22 and 25.

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“The important factor in setting up a pool league is not to get involved”

NEMGAR: No, the reason why is that the leagues have generated interest in the game of pool. If the leagues are properly run, these people are already thinking about next year. When my leagues are over, inside of three weeks people are already out getting their teams for the next season, practicing, going out.

PLAY METER: Have you had problems with teams disbanding?

NEMGAR: The major reason was because of the travel distances. But the team has always been able to put something together for the following week. But to ward against any problems, we allow a team to shoot with only four members. With three, it's a forfeit. But we haven't had this problem of team's disintegrating because each team has a captain who keeps the teams together, and these captains do a fantastic job in making sure they have the team members. If they find out someone is sick, they are quick to get a substitute.

PLAY METER: How are the league standings

compiled?

NEMGAR: The league secretary goes around and picks up all the scoresheets after a league night; then she adds them up. And she goes back and distributes a copy of these standings at each bar. By the way, the secretary gets paid out of the league fund.

PLAY METER: What about prizes. How is that decided?

NEMGAR: The leagues take care of themselves. This is where the president and vice president come in. About three weeks before the season is over, you should call in the league officers and go over with them how much they want to spend on trophies, how much on a banquet, and how much money should go back to the players. What they usually decide is for individual trophies for the first-place team and team trophies for the first-, second-, and third-place teams. An example of how the money might be divided is, if the league has collected \$2300 over the course of the season, you can take \$175 right off the top and give that to the

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“League play has helped us maintain a good rapport and a good personal relationship with the locations”

secretary for her expenses for the league. Then you have incidentals such as postage, maybe a special printing. Trophies usually run about \$150. Obviously the smaller leagues would cut down on the size and number of trophies awarded. So let's say that after all that there's \$1900 left. The league can throw one hell of a party. Or they can decide for everyone to pay his own way and split up all the money. But whatever they decide, let them do it. After all, it's their money. On the average, we've found that in a twelve-team league, the first place team ends up splitting around \$300 and the last-place team around \$175. So everyone gets a substantial piece of change back.

PLAY METER: Because of promotions such as these pool leagues, have you realized a significant increase in pool table collections over the years?

NEMGAR: The operator will realize a substantial increase in his pool tables. League play keeps the cash boxes full. Minimally, you're talking about a four-dollar increase in each pool table. But if you operate several tables, that increase starts adding up. However, I have found that the average shooter will spend two other nights, besides the league night, practicing on his pool game. The average shooter in the league will shoot anywhere from ten to twenty games of pool per week. One reason for that is we have oriented the area to pool over the years so that the game has become second nature to them. If your table has been averaging fifty dollars, for example, under the league plan, I think you'll find it'll increase anywhere from a few dollars more to maybe ten dollars more, and then again you're talking about this increase being steady year-round, multiplied by the number of pool tables you have. If I know I can jack up the take on a pool table by \$120 per year, that's a nice increase. Now how is this reflected over the course of a year? You'll find that collections during league play will rise, then level off. Then after league play it will dip slightly, then gradually taper off to the norm, but it'll probably still be at a higher average than what it was the year before because the more people you have shooting in your leagues, the more you've oriented them to pool playing. They become addicted to shooting pool.

PLAY METER: What size tables do you use in the leagues?

NEMGAR: Seven-footers. But that doesn't mean that every location in the league is using the seven-foot table. The locations may shoot with anywhere from a six- to eight-foot table. The reason is that you'll run into locations where they just don't have the room for a larger table. So players can shoot in our league on several different size tables. The only requirement is that it must be our table. Actually, the table size can then be looked upon as a

home field advantage of some sort.

PLAY METER: Do you find that the players in your leagues have a preference for the same size cueballs?

NEMGAR: We use a magnetic cue ball that's the same size as the object ball. The reason for this is that we believe the serious players do not like the oversize ball.

PLAY METER: Do you also hold playoffs and tournaments with your pool tables?

NEMGAR: Tournaments are a little bit of a hassle for us because they require the operator to get involved a little bit. However, we have found that our leagues mostly live and shoot for one thing—that is, the tournaments. This is the biggie for them. So we run a singles and an invitational team tournament every year. The singles tournament is a two-day affair where players from our leagues come in from all over the state. They pay an entry fee of \$7.50 and the tables are set on free play.

PLAY METER: So your major interest then is in the league play concept?

NEMGAR: Right. We think league play is a very necessary part of our business. It has helped us maintain a good rapport and a good personal relationship with the locations. When you're an operator, it's hard to get around to all your locations at a certain time. And the league idea is one way to keep in contact with them because you'll call them or they'll call you. Now I said that operators should not get involved, but that doesn't mean it won't require some work on your part, especially for the first year. But after that first year, you'll be able to leave a lot of that up to the officers of the league themselves. All you'll have to do is, about a month before the league is about to start up again, call a meeting of the league officers and let them know you're getting ready to fire up again.

PLAY METER: Can you give us an example of how these pool leagues have helped D&R Star's relationship with location owners.

NEMGAR: Well, for one thing, the pool leagues actually give us locations. We have actually had locations come to us and ask to get into our leagues, and we've told them that the only way they could was to have a D&R Star table in there. And they've said, "Okay, let's go." And bang there goes the table, the pingames, and so on. In fact, we've had some maverick operators who have tried to move in on some of our locations where we run the leagues, and the location owners have actually laughed them right out of the door.

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